

JP 11/20/98



THE INDEPENDENT

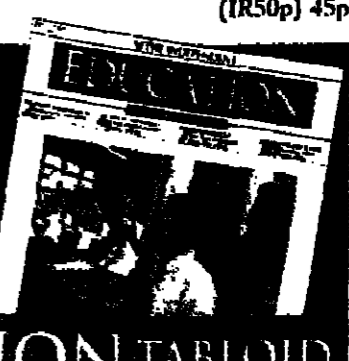
No 3,779

THURSDAY 26 NOVEMBER 1998

(1R50p) 45p

Should I tell my parents I blame them? DILEMMAS, PAGE 10
Clooney – a real movie star at last FILM, PAGE 12

Helping boys to do better at school



IN THE THURSDAY REVIEW

IN THE EDUCATION TABLOID

Anita Gonzalez lost her family in the Pinochet years. For her, and countless others, justice was done yesterday

THE HOUSE of Lords made legal history yesterday by ruling that General Augusto Pinochet was not immune from prosecution as a former head of state.

The decision by the five law lords left the way open for the former Chilean dictator and life senator to be extradited to Spain on charges of mass murder, terrorism and torture.

Their judgment was delivered to a packed House amid gasps of astonishment. By a majority of three to two the law lords decided that former heads of state can be held accountable by foreign courts for human rights abuses committed against their citizens.

In the process they took the almost unprecedented step of overturning the judgment of the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham of Cornhill, who had ruled in the High Court that the former dictator, who was 63 yesterday, did enjoy the benefit of immunity.

The decision was greeted with elation by political prisoners of the Chilean military junta and human rights groups. There was an outpouring of anger and bitterness by the general's supporters, with anti-British demonstrations in the Chilean capital, Santiago.

Isabel Allende, daughter of Salvador Allende, the democratically elected Chilean president who died during General Pinochet's coup, said: "This is marvellous. This demonstrates that in this world principles do exist and dictators cannot travel with impunity and think they

BY KIM SENGUPTA

are above the law." The lawyer Geoffrey Bindman, who represented Amnesty International and some of the general's victims, said the ruling was the "most important case in human rights law this century".

Conservative politicians, past and present, demanded that General Pinochet be freed by the Government. Baroness Thatcher, who had tea with him before his arrest, said: "The Senator is old, frail and sick, and on compassionate grounds alone should be allowed to return to Chile. I also remain convinced that the national interests of both Chile and Britain would be best served by releasing him, which the Home Secretary has it in his power to do."

Sir Norman Fowler, the Tories' home affairs spokesman, who had asked for legal proceedings to be ended after General Pinochet's High Court victory called for a statement from Jack Straw.

He said: "Wouldn't it be right for us to be able to question the Home Secretary on the use of what everyone agrees is very wide discretion. There are many people in this country and Chile who feel this affair has gone on for long enough and that the way forward is for the Home Secretary to use his discretion and bring these proceedings to an end."

A preliminary hearing into the Spanish extradition proceedings over General Pinochet is due to be heard before Bow Street magistrates in London next Wednesday. The request from Madrid based on investigations carried out by the investigating judge, Baltasar Garzon, and backed by the Spanish government accuses the general of complicity in torture, kidnapping and murder of political opponents including Spanish citizens.

The Home Secretary has also lying on his desk extradition requests for the former dictator from Switzerland, France and Belgium. He can decide the



Anita Gonzalez, who lost her husband, two sons and daughters-in-law, is hugged by her daughter Patricia Recabarren in Santiago after hearing the legal ruling EPA

end proceedings now and release the general on compassionate grounds and also on grounds of wider public interest.

The Lords' decision also opens the possibility of the general being tried in this country. Britain is a signatory to the International Convention on Torture, which allows courts here to try foreign nationals accused of torture anywhere in the world.

A group of torture and rape victims of General Pinochet's secret police had asked the Attorney-General, John Morris, to prosecute him, but he had refused pending clarification on the laws of immunity by the Lords.

The Home Office said last night that Mr Straw would not be making any comments as he had a quasi-judicial role in the matter. The Prime Minister,

Tony Blair, who is in Northern Ireland, was told about the verdict, and said he would speak after studying it fully.

A decision by Mr Straw to release the general would be greeted with outrage by his former victims, human rights groups and most of his own backbenchers. The judgment had been greeted with surprise by MPs on the left of the

party who would not normally be in sympathy with the Lords.

Jeremy Corbyn, who had been leading the campaign against the general, said: "There are really no grounds for compassion. He had a very minor back operation in a private hospital. He is a man who had perpetrated crimes against humanity, and he has not shown the slightest bit of remorse."

Agent tried to cream off £125,000 in transfer deal at Venables club

A FIFA-REGISTERED football agent attempted to cream off £125,000 from a transfer deal involving a club controlled by the former England coach Terry Venables.

Tom Lawrence asked the Swedish club Elfsborg to accept £200,000 from Portsmouth FC for the striker Mathias Svensson – then told the Swedes to send £125,000 back to his solicitor in England.

The Swedish board was expecting to receive only £75,000 for the player, so it tipped off Portsmouth officials, who cut Mr Lawrence out of the deal and paid the lower asking price.

Mr Lawrence's solicitor, Stephen Carter, confirmed details of the arrangement to The

BY STEVE BOGGAN

Independent last night, saying it was an attempt by his client to make as much money as possible.

The transfer took place in December 1996 while Mr Venables was chairman of Portsmouth and two months before he bought the struggling club for just £1. Svensson had been found by the Portsmouth scout, Ted Buxton, so Kjell Hallen, the Elfsborg deputy chairman, was reluctant to deal with an outside agent.

"It was a curious situation," said Mr Hallen. "We had more than one agent claiming to be involved, but one, Strata Sports [Mr Lawrence's company], told

us we would be receiving £200,000 and we were to send £125,000 back to England. There were a lot of letters and faxes and promises at the time and I was very upset and angry."

On 2 December, Mr Hallen, who was then deputy chairman, and his chairman, Ake Larsson, wrote to Paul Weld, the Portsmouth club secretary, saying: "It is [sic] too much people involved in this transfer. As we told you Friday, our amount is £75,000 once [and] for all."

Three days later, apparently under pressure from Mr Lawrence, Elfsborg wrote: "We have no agreement with all these agents. The only thing we have promised is if we get £200,000 from you we keep

£75,000 and sent the rest to Carter & Co [the Strata solicitors]. These agents cannot demand payment from us if we only get £75,000 from you – we have checked this with our union and our lawyers."

This is not the first time that Mr Lawrence and Strata Sports Marketing have been involved in a controversial transfer deal. Two weeks ago, The Independent revealed that Crystal Palace, now managed by Mr Venables, had agreed to pay £1.35m for two Chinese players, £400,000 more than the Chinese authorities were expecting to receive.

Mr Lawrence was involved in that deal. So was Mr Buxton, who discovered Svensson; he

found the Chinese players, Fan Zhiyi and Sun Jihai. The two sides are now reconciled, with the Chinese due to receive the higher amount.

After being cut out of the Svensson deal, Mr Lawrence submitted a bill for £58,750 for his services in "finding" the player. When the club refused to pay, he submitted three invoices for scouting charges which, added together, amounted to £58,750. Several months later, the club reached a final settlement of £20,000 for all his outstanding claims.

Asked why an attempt was made by Mr Lawrence to route £125,000 back to England, Mr Carter, his solicitor, said: "I think the simple explanation is

that the 10 per cent figure put on agents' fees is a misnomer – it varies from transaction to transaction. It is a business where there are a tremendous amount of abortions ... and I think this was an attempt to derive as much from the transaction as possible."

He said the proceeds were to have been split between Mr Lawrence and a Swedish-based Yugoslav agent who was not registered with Fifa, world football's governing body.

"It strikes me as a fairly standard business arrangement except it took place against the messy background that is football."

Mr Lawrence declined to comment.

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Labour plans to limit the rights of members to influence policy
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CENTRAL AMERICA HURRICANE APPEAL

No-one can have missed the distressing pictures showing the misery brought about when Hurricane Mitch swept through Central America. 12,000 dead, up to 2 million made homeless, crops destroyed, roads and bridges swept away, whole communities lost.

Y Care International, part of the YMCA, have been active in Central America for over 12 years with a network of local volunteers.

Thousands of people desperately need food, medicines, clothing and shelter. We are there now working to relieve the suffering and will be there for years to come. Please help the survivors overcome this terrible nightmare and rebuild their lives by sending whatever you can today.

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Name (Mr/Ms/Ms/Ds) _____

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I wish to give £20 £10 £5 £3 £1.50 £1 (Other £) _____

I enclose a cheque/PO payable to Y Care International OR Please debit my _____

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For £ _____ Date of Expiry _____

Signature _____ Please send this coupon to: Y Care International, FRISPOST, London E17 1SR.

Y-CARE INTERNATIONAL

TUESDAY TELEVISION

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THE THURSDAY REVIEW
The book is published on 24 November 1998

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PRC2

ITV Carlton

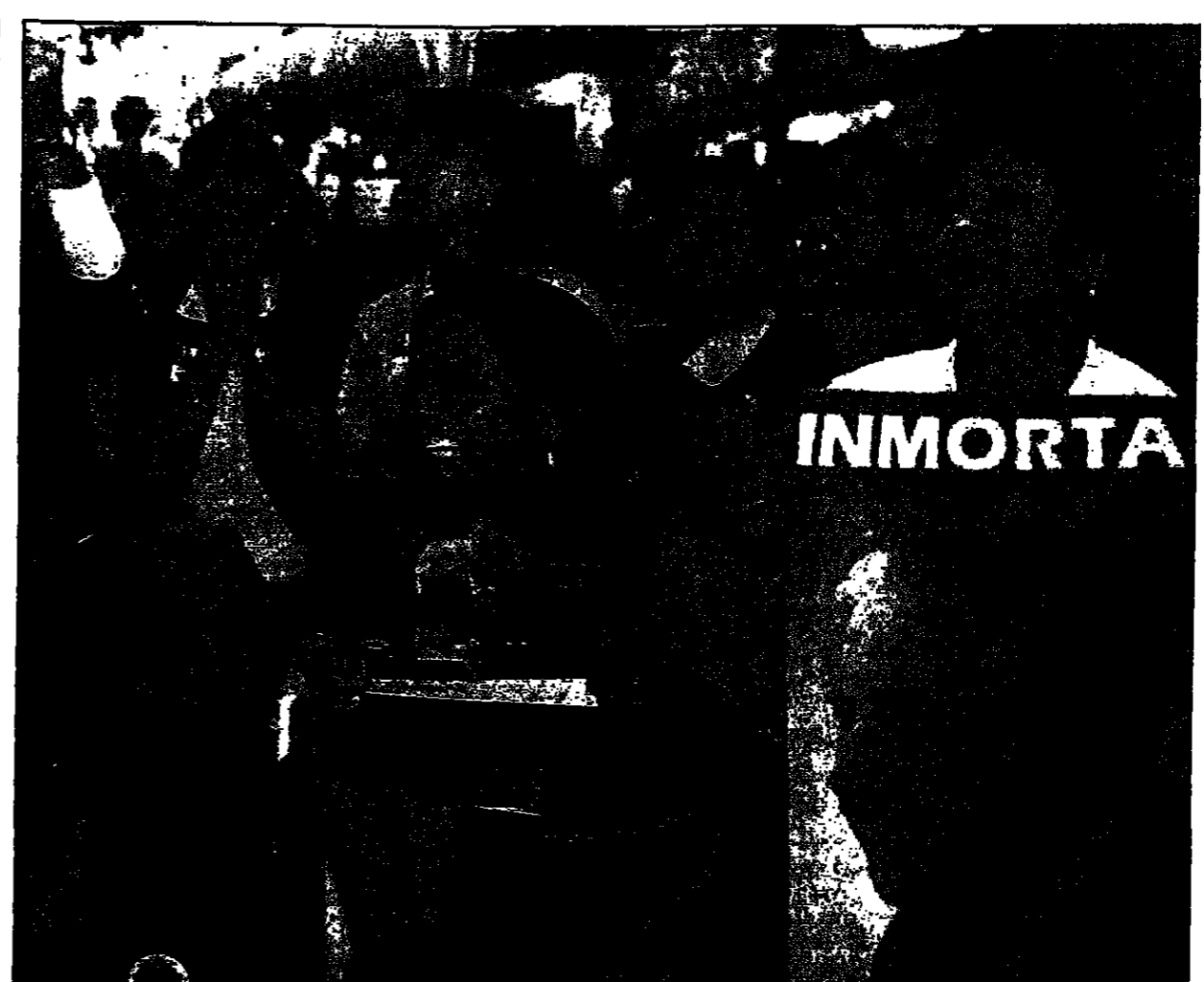
Channel 4

Channel 5

CP 11/10/50



Jeffmann
er South African, who
ard Steyn, grew up in
town but settled in
after becoming a
Scholar at Oxford
stry, where he attended
y's College. The son of a
or, he is known as a
ick and a liberal.
oyant and sociable, he
escribed by Legal
ss magazine as "the
dominant personality in
rds by a mile". Often
o carry other lords with
rough the strength of
gument, his outgoing
nality makes him
ar with journalists, and
s a strong public image
ed the appeal



Opponents of General Augusto Pinochet outside the north London clinic (left) where he has been treated, and supporters in Santiago, Chile (right) react to the decision yesterday by the law lords

Reuter

'A bad day for world dictators'

ring

al, in Southgate, north
n. supporters have stat-
if he lost his Lords ac-
and thus faced a
ged enforced stay, they
want him to be moved
ivate house. This would
e the bail conditions
changed.
tever happens on that
General Pinochet, who
scribed Britain as one
favourite countries to
will be here for a while.
KIM SENGUPTA

OUTSIDE THE Grovelands Pri-
ory Hospital in north London
the campaigners had been
singing their protest songs all
morning, but shortly after 2pm
they fell silent. Seventy or more
heads all pushed towards the
five broadcast from a hand-
held radio as the five law lords
gave their decision.

In the centre of the scrum
Mannell Rivas-Taquia, whose
uncle was murdered and whose
mother was imprisoned by the
Pinochet regime, had the radio
pushed to his ear. Suddenly he
gave a huge smile and the
crowd erupted.

It was a fair bet that the for-
mer dictator, behind the walls
of the private hospital where he
has been treated for the past
few weeks, heard the noise.

"There will be celebrations
around the world tonight,"
said Gloria Smith, another

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

Chilean protester. In part, she
was right. From Santiago, Chile
to Madrid's Plaza del Sol, op-
ponents of the former dictator
celebrated Britain's decision to
uphold what they considered
was natural justice.

In Spain, Isabel Allende,
daughter of the democratic
Chilean president ousted by
General Pinochet in 1973, said
it had been a "marvellous" de-
cision. Around her the crowds
scoffingly chanted "Happy
Birthday, General!" [Gen
Pinochet was 83 yesterday]

In France, MPs applauded
and the Prime Minister, Lionel
Jospin, said: "This is a sur-
prise, a joy, bad news for dic-
tators." The Swiss said they
would be continuing their re-
quest for Gen Pinochet's ex-
tradition, following proceedings

in Spain. In Chile itself there
was a celebration at the Santi-
ago-based headquarters of the
Association of Families of the
Disappeared. Women hugged
and wept as they released thou-
sands of white balloons to com-
memorate the victims. One of
the group's leaders, Viviana
Diaz, said: "We feel our missing
family members in our hearts.
We believe justice has started
for them. Today was an impor-
tant step, a triumph for human
rights. It tells heads of state
they can not kill or torture."

But celebration was not the
only story. With a passion equal
to that of his opponents, sup-
porters of Gen Pinochet, in-
cluding Baroness Thatcher
("The senator is old, frail and
sick, and on compassionate
grounds alone should be al-
lowed to return to Chile," she
said), said Britain was wrong.

REACTION

In Santiago the British and
Spanish embassies stepped up
security against crowds of
Pinochetistas, who attacked
journalists outside the Pinochet
Foundation. They also threat-
ened to march on the villa used
by the British ambassador,
Glynne Evans, in Las Condes
district, although she and her
staff are believed to have
moved to a safer location.

Gen Pinochet's son, also
called Augusto, said the de-
cision was a "cruel and sadistic
blow that goes beyond the
rights of mankind".

The Chilean President, Edu-
ardo Frei, was expected to an-
nounce he would press the
government's case to set Gen
Pinochet free for humanitarian
reasons and to prevent further



polarisation and disturbances.
But behind both the cele-
brations and voices of protest,
there was little doubting the im-
portance of the decision by the
law lords. The decision was ac-
cepted that, whatever one's
views on the rights or wrongs

of the decision, the implications
were dramatic. In effect, the
wessel words about diplomati-
c immunity for heads of state
have been overturned by
Britain's highest court, over-
ruling what a group of almost
equally senior bewigged fig-
ures decided less than a month
ago. The implications of the de-
cision are manifold.

First, there are the obvious
implications for Gen Pinochet.
Spain is not the only country
wishing to bring him to trial.
The Swedish Prime Minister,
Goran Persson, has said he
should stand trial. A Belgian
judge said suits filed by
Chilean-born Belgians were
admissible. Switzerland asked
for extradition in connection
with the disappearance of a
Swiss girl in 1973. Italian
magistrates have
opened an investigation into

Gen Pinochet over complicity
in murder.

If the news is bad for Gen
Pinochet, the implications for
others who have committed
political crimes are even worse.
The law lords' decision is not a
technical precedent for any-
where except the United King-
dom. None the less, the
applause on all sides of the
French parliament yesterday
when the news was announced
is a reminder of the cultural
sea-change in recent years,
traceable back to the end of the
Cold War. In the old days, su-
perpowers backed their re-
spective tyrants, a view
reflected in the US phrase,
with reference to a Latin Amer-
ican dictator: "He's a son of a
bitch — but at least he's our son
of a bitch."

Now, some might argue,
morality provides its own jus-

tification for taking action. The
Redding International Criminal
Court, whose creation was half-
blocked by the United States
this year, is intended to make
it possible to prosecute those
who have committed crimes
against humanity anywhere in
the world.

While the Home Secretary,
Jack Straw, could reject the ex-
tradition request from the
Spanish judge Baltasar Garzon,
for the moment the Chilean de-
mocrats and their supporters
are celebrating. In the words of
Sheila Cassidy — stripped, tor-
tured and held in solitary con-
finement in 1975 — "It's a great
moment for England and for
Chile. I feel proud to be English
today."

Additional reporting by Steve
Crawshaw, Liz Nash in
Madrid and Phil Davies, Latin
America Correspondent

LIFESTYLE

General 'ready to fight' and looking for house in country

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

GENERAL PINOCHET re-
mained last night at the Gro-
velands Priory Hospital in
Southgate, north London,
where he has stayed, on police
bail, for the past few weeks.

Supporters of the former
dictator insisted that he was
sick and frail. But just how ill
was impossible to say.

An ambulance had been on
hand to transport the General
to an Chilean Air Force jet
waiting for him at RAF Brize
Norton, in Oxfordshire, had the
law lords decided in his favour.
As it was, the ambulance left
the hospital without him.

The Chilean authorities
were yesterday refusing to
comment on the issue of the
General's health. "I'm sorry
that is something we are sim-
ply not allowed to talk about,"
said a spokesman at the em-
bassy in London.

General Pinochet's lawyers,
Kingsley Napley, also failed to
respond to inquiries about their
client's health. And the hospi-
tal said the embassy was deal-
ing with the issue.



General Pinochet's wife and daughter in London

But the General was cer-
tainly well enough to receive
visitors yesterday. Throughout
the day, a number of visitors —
believed to be London-based
Chilean officials — arrived at the
hospital. During the morning
his daughter, Lucia, arrived to
visit her father on his birthday.

Yesterday, it was reported

that the General's friends were
now looking for a house for
him to rent in the countryside
while the extradition proceed-
ings — which could drag on for
months — go ahead.

General Pinochet came to
London, one of his favourite
cities, for surgery for his back.
He had been recovering at the
London Clinic — another private
hospital — when he was taken
to Grovelands Priory. Officers
from the Metropolitan Police at
the request of the Spanish au-
thorities.

He was kept under armed
guard at the hospital in central
London — with police patrolling
the pavements outside to keep
watch on demonstrators who
gathered there — until 28 Octo-
ber when the High Court re-
fused the Spanish extradition
request. At this point he was
transferred to the Grovelands.

General Pinochet had origi-
nally flown into Britain at the
beginning of October, taking in
a visit to Madame Tussaud's
and Fortnum and Mason. He
also paid a visit to his old ally
Baroness Thatcher, with whom
he had a long conversation.

THE STORY SO FAR

- 22 September: General Pinochet is welcomed by the Foreign Office after a flight from Chile in which he has back problems.
- 30 September: Told he needs surgery on his back.
- 5 October: Has drinks with Baroness Thatcher.
- 9 October: Undergoes back surgery at the London Clinic, near Harley Street.
- 14 October: Madrid Magistrates' Court contacts the Metropolitan Police about Pinochet's presence in Britain.
- 16 October: He is arrested shortly before midnight after magistrates at Bow Street, London, issue a provisional arrest warrant under the Extradition Act 1989. Two Spanish judges requested Pinochet's detention on murder charge.
- 17 October: Scotland Yard announce arrest. The Spanish warrant alleges that between September, 1973 and December, 1983, Pinochet murdered Spanish citizens in Chile.
- 18 October: Peter Mandelson, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, rejects suggestion that the arrest might violate rules of diplomatic immunity.
- 19 October: Pinochet issues a statement vowing to fight extradition.
- 20 October: Human rights groups ask police to investigate allegations against Pinochet with a view to prosecuting him in Britain under the 1988 Criminal Justice Act.
- 21 October: Tony Blair denies that Britain is acting for political reasons.
- 22 October: Pinochet's lawyers seek judicial review of his detention. An emergency hearing at the High Court is adjourned.
- 27 October: Britons told not to travel to Chile.
- 28 October: Pinochet wins his High Court battle against his arrest and detention. But he remains under arrest "pending determination of any appeal against this decision".
- 29 October: Pinochet moved to Grovelands Priory Hospital, in north London.
- 4 November: Law Lords appeal opens. Alun Jones QC, for the CPS and Spanish authorities says that Pinochet must be denied sovereign immunity because he was not head of state at various junctures when he allegedly committed "sav-
age and barbarous crimes".
- 7 November: Pinochet issues statement: "A show trial in a foreign land is not justice. It is certainly not British justice."
- 25 November: Law Lords rule that Pinochet is not immune from arrest.

LINUS GREGORIADIS

0800 400 454

TNT

Mother is questioned as girl recovers from 28-hour ordeal

CHARLOTTE JONES, the three-year-old girl discovered in woodland 28 hours after going missing, was recovering in hospital yesterday as doctors marvelled at how she had survived her ordeal.

She sat up in bed at Warrington General Hospital in Cheshire and opened presents from local police who had feared the worst. She appeared to be back to her "bubbly" self playing and chatting with the nurses.

Dr Nick Wild, clinical director of childhealth for Warrington Hospital NHS Trust, was surprised by Charlotte's resilience.

He said the fact that the little girl had spent the night in the woods, where ground temperatures do not drop quite as low as in exposed areas, may have helped her to survive "what was a potentially life-threatening episode".

She was reported missing by her mother, Michelle, at 6pm on Monday. Ms Jones, 24, a stu-

BY CLARE GARNER

dent, told police that she had last seen her daughter at 5.15pm as they waved goodbye to a social worker at the gate to their house.

Police arrested Ms Jones shortly after they found Charlotte at 9.30pm on Tuesday. Last night, she remained in custody at Warrington police station, where detectives were still questioning her.

Warrington Borough Council is legally responsible for Charlotte's care. A spokesman said the council was working closely with her family and others to reach "the very best short-term decision - a decision that is right for Charlotte".

About 60 officers were involved in the search for Charlotte, which covered the area around her home, nearby waterways and buildings on open land.

As darkness fell on Tuesday night the prospects of finding her alive were reducing. Janet

Critchley, 29, a police child protection officer, described how the fog was coming down and she and her colleague, Detective Constable Mark Toker, were preparing for a long night when she heard a child's whimpers.

They fought their way through dense undergrowth in Gypsy Wood, three miles from Charlotte's home and found her crying and shivering as she sat in the middle of a patch of brambles.

"She was wet and there were no signs of any food," said Constable Critchley, adding that she thought Charlotte had been in the same position for a long time.

"She was upset and distressed and looked very happy to see us... She just wanted to be picked up and my colleague wrapped her in his coat."

Charlotte was taken to the nearby home of Bill Ashcroft, 61. He said: "I was in the kitchen and I heard the CID man shout 'Bill, Bill'."

"I ran through and he was on the telephone and the little girl was on his knee... she was hugging him. She was very quiet and her eyes were watery. She looked really scared."

Constable Critchley, who visited Charlotte in hospital yesterday, said that "she was very clingy with her family".

She added: "I gave her a Po telehubby, gave her a hug and she was smiling."

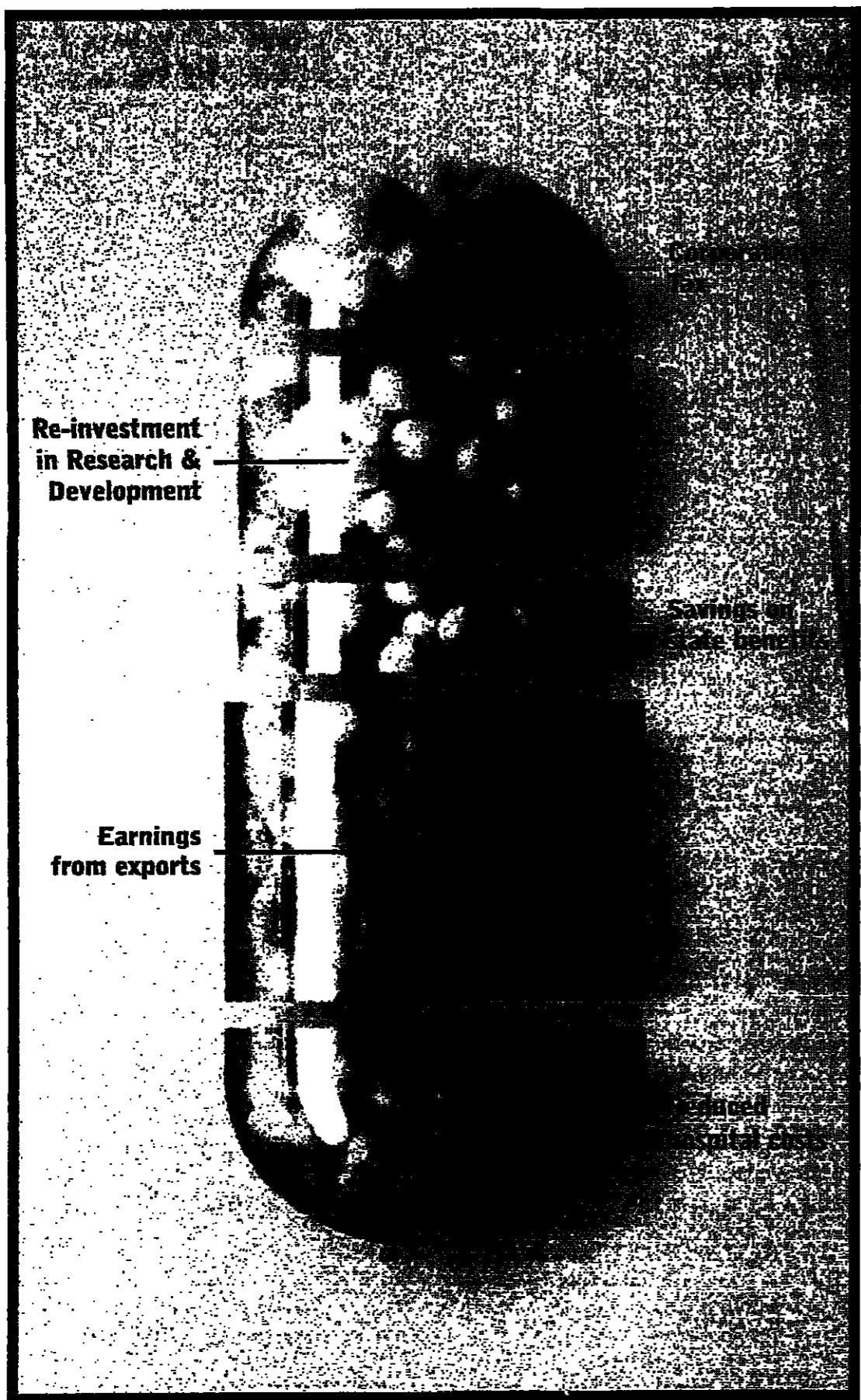
Charlotte has a large number of scratches and abrasions to her face, hands, legs and feet in addition to "cold injuries" to her hands and feet. "They have been exposed. I think she must have taken her shoes and socks off," Dr Wild said.

He added that it was difficult to speculate on any long-term psychological damage Charlotte may have suffered, but said that if she had enjoyed a relatively trauma-free life he imagined she would get over the incident in the "goodness of time".



Three-year-old Charlotte Jones, who went missing from her Warrington home on Monday night, recovering in hospital yesterday with Constable Janet Critchley (standing), who found her, and her aunt, Yvonne Jones

Sickness Benefit.



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in Research &
Development

Earnings
from exports

This year, the National Health Service will spend £6 billion on medicines - about 25 pence per person per day.

In return, the pharmaceutical industry will re-invest some 20% of its annual turnover in the search for new and improved medicines.

This investment will benefit the National Health Service by helping to reduce hospital admissions and saving over £10 billion a year on patient care.

The value of medicines goes far beyond supporting the NHS. The pharmaceutical industry provides employment for more than 300,000 people and exports over £5 billion of medicines a year, producing one of the country's largest trade surpluses of £2 billion.

Over the past five years pharmaceutical companies have committed over £2 billion in capital investment, and more is planned.

The benefit of the industry is also felt within the Treasury as pharmaceutical companies in Britain pay hundreds of millions of pounds in Corporation Tax each year.

But perhaps the industry is least known for its investment in education, funding half of all post-graduate training for GPs and supporting universities to the tune of £100 million a year.

If all this good work is not encouraged, it wouldn't just be the industry that would fall sick. It would be the country.

The Association of the
British Pharmaceutical Industry
12 Whitehall London SW1A 2DY



TAKE CARE OF AN INDUSTRY THAT TAKES CARE OF BRITAIN

Strains show in peace process

THE NORTHERN Ireland peace process showed ominous signs of strain yesterday as Tony Blair's round of talks with political parties in Belfast served to expose differences between important elements.

In particular, David Trimble, the First Minister designate, differed sharply and publicly with his deputy, Seamus Mallon, of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, on how to move the process forward.

When Mr Mallon signalled that he believed movement within 10 days was all but imperative, Mr Trimble, leader of the Ulster Unionists, castigated him for what he described as unhelpfully generating artificial deadlines.

A clear fault-line has thus developed between the two key political figures, who are supposed to be working together to make the peace process succeed. While they have diverged before now, it has become obvious that they have proved unable to reconcile their positions on a crucial and fundamental issue.

Mr Blair spent much of the day meeting a succession of parties before journeying to Dublin where today he will address a joint meeting of the two houses of the Irish parliament. The Prime Minister said later that he had had a good series of discussions, and that progress could be made.

He added: "I want all this Agreement implemented as soon as possible. All the issues connected with decommissioning and the executive were talked about, we thrashed through them."

"I'm going to do everything I can to push it on, to keep the momentum going forward, because I know the people out there are just desperate for this thing to work. I'm going to keep on this very, very hard

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

indeed over these coming days."

Mr Trimble and the Sinn Féin president, Gerry Adams, meanwhile exchanged attacks during the day, the Unionist leader saying society had invested too much in the process "to allow it to be destroyed by a handful of unreconstructed militarists in the republican movement". Mr Adams, in turn, accused Unionists of attempting to exercise a veto, and of "childish tactics, childish antics and blatant stalling tactics".

Earlier, Mr Mallon had warned that unless real progress was made very soon "then the potential for this whole experiment to crack up is much greater than people realise". Unless there was movement, the process would be in great danger of losing credibility, he added.

Mr Trimble's response was to declare: "It is not helpful to generate a sense of crisis where none exists. Nor is it helpful to try to generate artificial deadlines when there aren't deadlines in the process." The Unionist leader later added, in what appeared to be an attempt to soothe things down, that periodic disagreements between himself and Mr Mallon were only to be expected.

Les Rodgers, chairman of the Northern Ireland Police Federation, said Mr Blair had been shocked and taken aback by the plight of police families.

He added: "I think he had his eyes opened. I don't think he realised to what depth people would go to intimidate officers and their families - blast bombs and petrol bombs thrown at houses, thugs gathering outside houses, all while the men were away at Drumree."

MILLENNIUM BUG WATCH

TAKING ACTION against the millennium bug can sometimes create more problems than it appears to solve. Just ask the staff at John Radcliffe Hospital, one of the biggest in Oxford, which recently upgraded the software which controls its 2,300-line switchboard to cope with the year 2000.

When the software was installed, the system collapsed, leaving only 69 extensions working. In a desperate scramble, lines were reallocated; two for Accident & Emergency, and one each for every other ward. Other hospitals were put on alert to receive emergency admissions.

The problems, which began on the Sunday morning,



continued until 3.10am the next day, while BT was called in to set up an emergency switchboard.

When engineers tried to get to the root of the trouble, they found that it was not the software that was faulty after all. The process of installing the software had triggered a hidden problem in the printed circuit boards holding the hardware that made up the switchboard.

CHARLES ARTHUR

JP 11/20/50

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DEPENDENT
November 1998



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AVID McKITTRICK
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CHARLES ARTHUR

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bin there done that

Redwood hotly denies holding talks with bathroom sponge

WHAT GENIUS of melodrama arranged for the announcement of the law lords' ruling on General Pinochet's appeal? Surely serendipity alone could not have marshalled the occasion so perfectly, first of all ensuring the verdict would arrive on the old villain's birthday, then procuring the perfect sequence for the individual judgments to be read out. In dramatic terms the hearing has been rather like the kind of experimental theatre favoured by German directors of a sadistic bent – a celebration of enigma in which old atrocities mingled surreally with the picking of legal nits. In the early days, though, the subject

matter alone guaranteed that it was something of a hot ticket, with various celebrity politicians turning up to listen, staying for just long enough to realise that they had not the faintest idea what any of it meant, and then departing for something a little more vaudeville. *Kavanagh QC* it wasn't. The main body of the audience, whether they were the claque of Pinochistas in cashmere and silk or the rather more coarsely fibrous group of protesters, were doggedly attentive, but even they couldn't pretend it was easy stuff to sit through.

The denouement couldn't have been more different. Imagine the

scene: five sage and eminent lawyers must hand down the verdicts which will decide an old man's fate. Justice has covered her eyes, not out of impartiality but because she can hardly bear to look. Then the most senior law lord steps up to the penalty spot and takes his kick. It goes wide and so does the next. The crowd thrills and slumps according to its sympathies. They think it's all over. But then the next ball goes in. And the next. It's all down to the final shot and when that bellies the netting the place gives a collective gasp, unanimous only in its sense of unexpected reversal. Celebration has turned instant-

THE SKETCH



THOMAS
SUTCLIFFE

ly to grief, commiseration to congratulation. Hardly surprising that the Commons couldn't match it

for drama, although it wasn't exactly a dull day in the House. It was Mr Mandelson's turn to speak in the debate on the Queen's Speech and he began with an effective sting, attributing to Mr Redwood a dis- obliging remark about Mr Hague, to the effect that he had had "more interesting conversations with a bathroom sponge". Mr Redwood went puce and leapt to his feet to deny that any such words had ever passed his lips. He held the right honourable sponge in the highest regard. He went even puer when reminded of his view that the Conservatives had considered all the leadership candidates and elected

the worst. Never said it, protested Mr Redwood, but his denial had the sort of hot-faced fluster that confirms suspicions rather than dispels them. "What a way to speak of your leader," continued Mr Mandelson. "We wouldn't get away with it in our party. The men in the dark would never allow it."

It didn't all go Mr Mandelson's way, though. John Bercow, the Tories' bouncing bomb, celebrated his naming as Backbencher of the Year by repeatedly leaping to his feet to ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry to give way. Mr Mandelson declined. This wasn't a good idea. Mr Bercow relishes a

challenge and began to ask at ever- decreasing intervals, occasionally letting his frustrated zeal issue as little yelps of condemnation. "You're useless!" he shouted. "You're fat!"

Mr Mandelson punished him by taking interventions from every- body else with increasingly sar- castic courtesy. Had David Blunkett's dog been in the chamber she would have stood a better chance of getting Mr Mandelson to sit down, but Mr Bercow didn't give up. It took him far too long, but Mr Mandelson finally realised that if you have a thorn in your heel it is usually best to put your feet up for a while and let it work itself out.

Worker rights likely to be watered down

GOVERNMENT PLANS to increase trade union rights in the workplace are likely to be watered down to meet employers' concerns, Peter Mandelson hinted yesterday.

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry told Labour MPs during a debate on the Queen's Speech that he was "willing to give reassurance" to employers anxious about the impact of the Fairness at Work Bill on their businesses.

"We want to ensure that the proposals work well and strike a fair balance and, yes, to give reassurance, where this is justified, to employers who are understandably concerned about the impact of this legislation on their businesses," he said.

Under pressure from the Confederation of British Industry, the Downing Street Policy Unit has urged that workers should be members of a union for at least 12 months before they are counted towards recognition.

Unions believe they have successfully resisted the idea of a two-tier membership, but they may have lost the battle to

TRADE UNIONS

BY SARAH SCHAEFER

scrap the upper limit on the amount of compensation for unfair dismissal. The present ceiling of £12,000 is likely to be increased to £40,000 or £50,000.

As part of the drive to make Britain the best environment to trade electronically, Mr Mandelson announced the appointment of a "high-ranking digital envoy" who would ensure that businesses and consumers take "maximum advantage" of the Internet. "This person will speak for the UK in the international area to promote the UK as a global hub for electronic commerce, business and investment, and to drive forward the cross-government strategy for electronic commerce," he said.

Mr Mandelson pledged that "if and when" Britain joined the European single currency there should be more than "artificial convergence". But John Redwood, the Conservative spokesman on trade, accused him of failing to mention job losses, or the crisis in manu-

facturing industry, because all ministers were interested in was "abolishing hereditary peers. People out there are not clamouring for reform of the House of Lords. They are demanding more jobs, better schools, better hospitals and this Queen's Speech does absolutely nothing to stop the collapse in manufacturing which we see going on day by day," he said.

John Major, the former Conservative prime minister, reflected on Britain's entry into the European single currency, and said: "Tony Blair used to accuse me of sitting on the fence when it came to setting out a clear policy, he is now sitting on the adjacent spike."

David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, was rebuked by the Speaker, Betty Boothroyd, for saying he would not be present for the debate. But he changed his plans after Miss Boothroyd said it was her "personal feeling" that Mr Blunkett should be present unless he was dealing with a matter of the "utmost urgency elsewhere".



Tory leader William Hague celebrating at the Savoy in London yesterday after being voted Parliamentarian of the Year by a panel of political journalists Neville Elder

'Sharks feed on inventors'

CORPORATE "SHARKS", expensive patenting and a narrow education system are crippling Britain's finest inventors, a group of leading entrepreneurs told MPs yesterday.

Trevor Baylis, the inventor of the clockwork radio, David Potter, chairman of Psion plc, and the computer pioneer Sir Clive Sinclair told the Commons science and technology committee that business costs meant that home-grown ideas were often developed abroad.

Mr Baylis said more state aid was vital to maintain the British tradition of lone inventors. "My problem was that when I first had my idea, I had no help with preparing a business plan.

TECHNOLOGY
BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

patenting or even the astronomical cost of translation of patents. Without that help, how can a fellow protect himself from predators?"

Mr Potter, whose company now employs 1,200 staff thanks to the success of its personal organiser, said Britain suffered from a "cultural" problem with applied science that contrasted sharply with the US belief in "the dignity of practical knowledge".

Sir Clive said it was appalling that 50 per cent of all new products originated as British ideas but were developed overseas.

THE HOUSE

UN condemned

GEORGE GALLOWAY, the Labour MP for Glasgow Kelvin, stunned MPs when he condemned the United Nations for causing a "quiet massacre" in Iraq through sanctions. Dismissing challenges to explain what the West should do against Saddam Hussein, the MP spoke of the "little echoes of Tel Aviv in the chamber". He added: "A walk through the vale of tears that is Iraq is almost too much for the ordinary mortal to bear. So

searing is the grief, so traumatised are the population, so enraged are the people with whom we say we have no quarrel."

Tourism fears

THE GOVERNMENT shows "precious little concern" for the tourism industry and has turned guest houses in seaside resorts into over-spill DSS hostels for asylum seekers, Nigel Waterson, the Tory MP for Eastbourne said, accusing Labour of delaying a tourism strategy.

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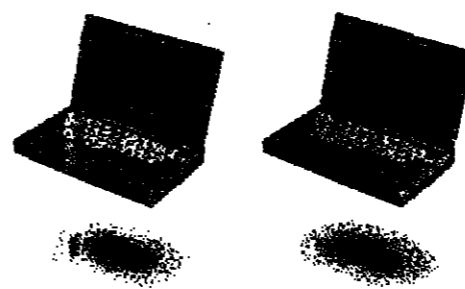
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BBC vows to banish old sitcoms

TITTER YE NOT - the BBC is no longer amused by the sight of trousers falling down in front of a vicar. Comedies that rely on "suburban sofas and knitted pullovers" are to be banished from the screen.

Peter Salmon, the controller of BBC1, announced a new £30m investment in situation comedy yesterday, but promised to update a genre he admitted had been a weakness in recent years. "There are two things the public currently seem to like more than anything else," Mr Salmon told the Broadcasting Press Guild. "One is watching sitcoms, the other is saying how terrible they are."

"I am the net-curtain comedy killer," added Mr Salmon. "The man who took out a contract on suburban sofas, knitted

BY PAUL MCCANN
Media Editor

ted pullovers, and will finally do for some of those dreary 1950s scenarios that have infected too many British comedies."

Mr Salmon said the channel was looking for comedies that "owed more to *Coronation Street* and *The Simpsons* than to *Ealing Comedies* and *Carry On* films".

He did not name the comedies that would be scrapped. But types of show like *Next of Kin*, where Penelope Keith played a reluctant grandmother, and *A Prince Among Men*, a comedy about social-climbing starring Chris Barrie, had had their day, he said. Both shows have ended. Mr Salmon pointed to the new Victoria



Shows such as 'Next of Kin', starring William Gaunt and Penelope Keith, are thought to be too old-fashioned

Wood show, *Dinner Ladies*, which attracted an audience of 11 million when it began last week, as an example of a new wave of sitcoms planned for the channel.

The £30m is a 50 per cent increase on last year and there

are a large number of new projects in the pipeline. After making *The Royle Family* for BBC2, Caroline Aherne is returning as Mrs Merton, in a show called *Mrs Merton and Malcolm*. It will be set in her Stockport home rather than

showing her interacting with a studio audience.

There is to be a new historical comedy called *Let Them Eat Cake*, set in pre-revolutionary France, starring Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders. *The Alan*

Davies Show, on Radio 4, is transferring to television.

Mark Addy, one of the stars of *The Full Monty*, is making the BBC's first American-based sitcom. In *Too Much Sun* he will play a debauched British actor in Hollywood.

Hospital neglected, dying patient

A MAN with Legionnaire's disease who was left for hours in a blood-soaked bed waiting to be transferred to intensive care suffered an "unacceptable" delay in his treatment, the Health Service Ombudsman said yesterday.

The man, who had difficulty breathing and was in distress, needed a ventilation tube inserted before being transferred but had to wait six hours to be seen by an anaesthetist at Warrington General Hospital. His drip became dislodged and was not replaced for two hours, leaving him with bloodstained pyjamas and bedding. Abnormal test results, showing the oxygen level in his blood was low, were not acted on. He died two weeks later.

The case is among the first involving clinical judgement to be investigated by the ombudsman, Michael Buckley, whose powers were extended to include clinical matters in 1996. It highlights the extreme pressures on the NHS and the lottery faced by patients when there are not enough staff to care for all those who require immediate attention.

The man, Mr B, was admitted to hospital on 28 November 1996 and was visited by his family the following day. At 5.45pm a doctor told his wife, Mrs B, that he was in a critical condition and would have to be transferred to the intensive care unit of a neighbouring hospital. The doctor added that the following six hours would be crucial.

By this time Mr B had pneumonia, his breathing was laboured and he was becoming increasingly distressed. His two sons had to restrain him from removing his oxygen mask. Before he could be transferred he needed a tube inserted into his lungs so that he could be ventilated on the journey but no anaesthetist was available to carry this out until 11.45pm.

Mr Buckley did not criticise the anaesthetists involved in the case because the three who were on duty at Warrington hospital at the time were fully stretched attending to other very ill patients.

The hospital admitted the care provided was "sub-optimal" but said there was

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

nothing it could have done differently in the circumstances and that Mr B's death could not have been avoided.

However, Mr Buckley criticised the hospital for failing to ensure there was direct communication between the medical and anaesthetic staff in such an emergency. Even if an earlier transfer would not have saved Mr B's life, it "would at least have meant that he was more comfortable and received sooner the level of care that he needed".

In separate cases, the ombudsman also criticised two GPs for striking patients off their lists unreasonably or precipitately. In a case in Scotland



Buckley: Investigation

a GP struck off a patient who had complained when he was given a prescription for a painkiller instead of the antibiotics that he had requested for a bout of flu. Mr Buckley did not criticise the GP's decision to withhold antibiotics but said he had acted in the heat of the moment in striking off the patient.

In the second case, a GP in Yorkshire struck off the parents of a woman who had removed herself from the list of a partner after a disagreement. The parents had been on their GP's list for many years without difficulty.

GPs have the legal right to strike patients off their list without giving a reason but Mr Buckley said in the particular circumstances of the two cases the GPs' actions were unreasonable and contravened the principles of good practice.

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Nation turns increasingly to drink

BY GLENDA COOPER
Social Affairs Correspondent

BRITONS ARE spending 40 per cent more on alcohol than they did 30 years ago, with wine and spirits becoming increasingly popular tipples, according to a new survey.

Drinking wine on foreign holidays, seeing a drink as a "cheap treat" and less public disapproval of women drinking are likely to be reasons behind the change in spending patterns.

The Government's latest annual Family Spending survey into "who's spending, how much, on what and where" shows that we are also changing what we drink as well as how much we consume.

While traditional beers and ciders still outsell wines and spirits, expenditure on them rose by only a quarter in real terms, while spending on wines and spirits increased by three-quarters in 30 years. The biggest rise in alcohol spending was in the 1970s and 1980s.

The poorest fifth of the population accounted for the biggest rise in alcohol spending, up 80 per cent, whereas for the richest fifth it rose by 35 per cent. "There is no obvious reason why spending on alcohol should have increased so much," said Denis Down, the report's editor.

"Probably it is down to increased incomes, but also changes in fashion. People are also getting used to wine on foreign holidays. It may also be seen as one of the cheaper luxuries, particularly for those on lower incomes. And it could be that drinking is now more acceptable amongst women than it used to be."

The largest rise in spending

THE NATION'S SPENDING

- The average household spend is £329 a week.
- Household spending ranges from £96 to £720 between the poorest and richest families.
- Spending on housing has risen from 9 per cent to 16 per cent of total expenditure.
- Households spend on average £56 a week on food and £55 on leisure.
- Tobacco has fallen from 6 per cent to 2 per cent of total spending.
- Spending on alcohol has risen by 40 per cent over the past 30 years.
- More than 70 per cent say that they gamble, compared with 55 per cent in 1964-95.
- Spending on tea and coffee has doubled in the past 30 years, but by 1997-98 more was spent on coffee than on tea.
- Spending in the South-east is more than £60 above the UK average.
- Households in Wales and the North-east buy the fewest toiletries.

overall has been in housing, thanks not only to the growing numbers of those buying their own home, but the increasing passion for home improvement. As a percentage of total spending it is up from 9 per cent of total expenditure in 1968 to 16 per cent today, accounting for £51.50 per week.

While nearly all of the spend is due to rent, mortgage, council tax and water bills, 15 per cent is spent on maintenance, repairs and decorations. "Obviously part of the growth in proportion is the

increased number of mortgages," Mr Down said. "But the rise also includes DIY and we know that owner-occupiers are spending a lot on maintaining their houses."

Mr Down said the gap between rich and poor remains as wide as ever, with the richest spending 60 per cent more than they did 30 years ago compared to a rise in spending of only 13 per cent by the worst off.

The average weekly expenditure of households in the United Kingdom was £329, £20 up on last year. But spending varies from an average of £96 for the worst tenth of households compared with £720 for the highest tenth.

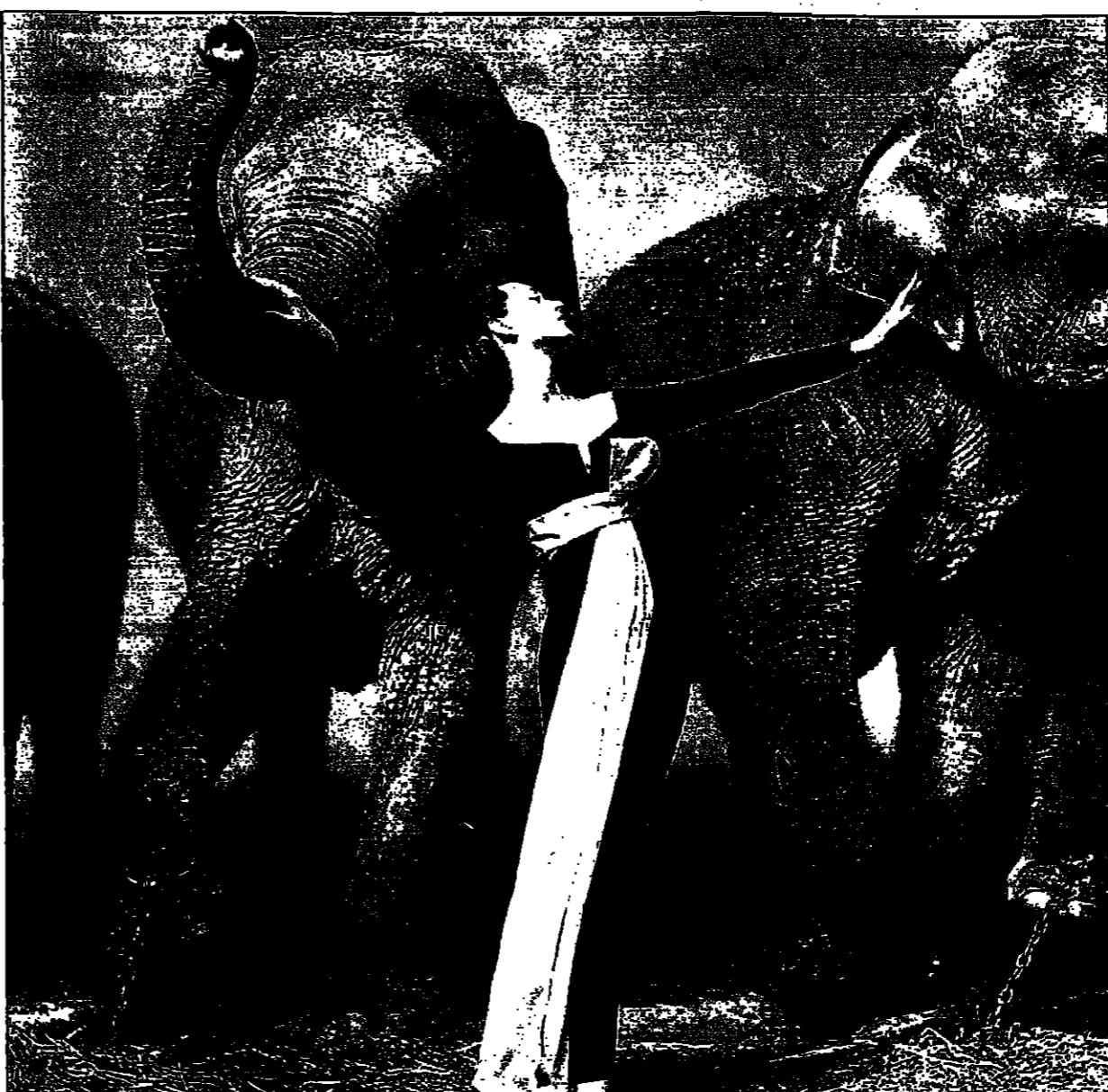
Lone parents are among the worst off, Mr Down said. Families headed by one parent spent about £200 a week - half of what families with two or more adults spent.

Thirty years ago food was by far the biggest drain on expenditure. But with the growth of the leisure society, Britons now spend only 80p a week more on essential nourishment than leisure goods and services.

The nation's love affair with consumer durables continues with most people now seeing them as a necessity. More than 90 per cent of all households now own a washing machine, more than 99 per cent have a refrigerator and 94 per cent own a telephone. Ownership of videos and CD players also continues to increase.

Spending on tobacco saw a "striking" decrease among the richest, from £18.50 a week to £8, as health messages started to take effect.

Family Spending 1997-98, is published by the Stationery Office; price £39.50



Richard Avedon's famous fashion photograph of 'Dovima with Elephants' which goes on display today as part of the 'Silver and Syrup' exhibition at the Canon Photography Gallery at London's Victoria and Albert Museum

Inquest to rule on gold bounty

BY JANE HUGHES

IT IS the stuff treasure hunters' dreams are made of. Nigel Wilding and his father-in-law, John Sutton, were scouring a beach in East Yorkshire when, they claim, they discovered a rare gold sword pommel thought to be worth hundreds of thousands of pounds.

While Mr Sutton swept the beach with his £500 hi-tech metal detector, Mr Wilding chanced upon the pommel using his father-in-law's spare, a second-hand children's detector bought at a car boot sale.

Indeed it was only a twist of fate that saw 35-year-old Mr Wilding pick up the detector at all. He had earlier been fishing but gave up after failing to catch anything. The men, both from the Hull area, say they found the early 7th-century Saxon pommel, believed to have belonged to a king, inside a clay boulder near Aldbrough last November. At first they thought it was part of a cigarette lighter.

A treasure trove inquest is being held in Hull to investigate the circumstances of the find and determine ownership.

Craig Barclay, acting senior curator of the Yorkshire Museum in York, said the pommel, which is less than 2in long, has a bronze centre with 81 per cent gold filigree sheathing over it. "It is undoubtedly of national importance," he added.

The inquest was due to be heard earlier this year, but was adjourned for further inquiries after a letter arrived, expressing concerns about the time and location of the find. There were then several challenges to the men's claims about where the pommel was found, including one from the Centre for Wetland Archaeology.

Under the 1996 Treasure Act, a reward may be paid to the finder, the occupier of the land where it was found and anyone with an interest in the land. The inquest continues today.

Brent Spar break-up begins

THE LAST act of the Brent Spar saga began yesterday when Shell, owner of the giant oil-storage buoy, began to dismantle it in a Norwegian fjord.

It was the company's final retreat from plans to sink the 14,500-tonne rig in the Atlantic, which the Greenpeace environmental pressure group defeated in a blaze of world-wide publicity in 1995.

Yesterday, one of the world's largest floating cranes began removing the 1,600-tonne top-side and the control and accommodation superstructure,

BY MICHAEL MCCARTHEY
Environment Correspondent

which will be scrapped. The tubular hull of the Spar will then be cut into metal rings, which will be filled with ballast and used to form a ferry quay at Melkjarvik, near Stavanger.

Shell's land-based disposal of the rig will take a year and cost £43m, compared with the £4.5m bill for dumping it in the ocean.

Greenpeace saw that plan as a test case of how all maritime oil rigs should be disposed of and deployed its skill at eye-

catching protest to fight it, occupying the Spar from helicopters and boats. Protests escalated and Shell, faced with an international boycott of its petrol stations, abandoned its plan.

Its change of heart embarrassed John Major, then prime minister, who had sided with Shell.

The rig has been moored in deep Norwegian fjords for the past three years, and is now in Yrkjefjord, north of Stavanger.

In July the oil-exploring countries of the North Sea and

North Atlantic, including Britain, agreed that all oil platforms in the sea would be brought ashore for disposal, except the largest. Britain's agreement will cost the UK oil industry £9bn.

Chris Rose, Greenpeace's programme director, said yesterday: "The real significance of the campaign was that one of the largest companies in the world had to change its plan very publicly because it did not fit with the values of its customers and of the public."

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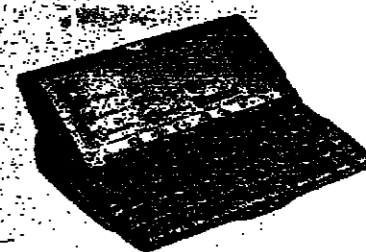
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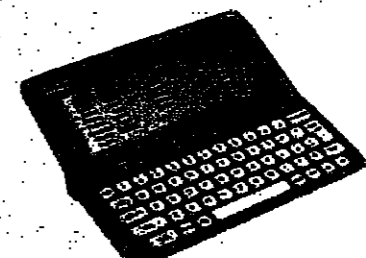
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Education: Thousands of old and dangerous buildings throughout the country can now be renovated, says Blunkett

Crumbling schools get grant of £5.4bn

SCHOOLS WILL receive £5.4bn over three years to repair their crumbling buildings, David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, announced yesterday.

BY JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

the health and safety of pupils and staff.

Mr Blunkett said on a visit to Parliament Hill School in north London: "It will mean a new beginning for thousands of crumbling schools, as their leaking roofs, crumbling masonry and temporary huts are replaced."

"Already in the past 18 months we have made a substantial start. More than 6,000 schools have had money for badly needed improvements. For too long, many of our schools have had to live with poorly maintained accommodation."

"Pupils and teachers have a right to expect decent conditions in which to learn and teach: this new investment will go a long way to providing those conditions."

For 1999-2000, local authorities will be able to borrow £454m, grant-maintained and church schools will be allocated £242m and the Government will offer £350m to support private investment in improving and maintaining school buildings and £300m for New Deal projects. In the following year, £1.5bn will be allocated and £1.8bn in 2001-02. A further £800m will be provided by local authorities.

The £5bn includes some of the £1bn from the windfall tax for school buildings announced shortly after the government took office. Mr Blunkett said the investment amounted to an extra £750 per pupil.

David Willetts, the Tory education spokesman, attacked Mr Blunkett for "recycling" announcements. "Last week, they

reannounced their Sure Start policy for young children. This week they are recycling the announcement of a capital investment programme for school repairs. There is nothing here which has not been announced several times already."

But Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said: "Teachers and pupils round the country will welcome this investment in building stock. The environment in which pupils and teachers work can help or hinder educational development."

"My one concern must remain the involvement of private companies in the funding of this initiative. Caution is needed about the Private Finance Initiative, which relies on the vagaries of private companies' profit-making."



David Blunkett during his visit yesterday to Parliament Hill School where renovation is under way Mark Chilvers

Falling to pieces after 100 years

LAST MONTH a 10-year-old boy at Drayton Green primary school in Ealing, west London, was taken to hospital in an air ambulance after a piece of metal drainpipe weighing 70lb fell on him as he played football in the playground.

His fellow pupils were said to be traumatised as they gathered around his motionless figure on the ground.

Four weeks later he has returned to the school. Peter Brandreth, one of the school's parent governors, said yesterday: "It is a miracle he is alive. The whole experience has been horrendous, both for children and parents. It is the result of 50 years of neglect of school buildings."

When local education authority officers examined the Victorian building, they found that all the window frames were rotten and that another piece of metal drainpipe was loose. The library had to be closed because the ceiling was coming down.

While the Health and Safety Executive investigates, the authority has made the school safe. Perspex covers the unsafe

windows and dangerous drainpipes have been removed. Parents are still anxious.

Bethan Marshall, who has two children there, said: "The school dealt brilliantly with the incident but you could see the children looking up at the fabric of the building when they returned. It's not something a school should have to deal with."

"I question whether a bidding system is sufficient to deal with this. The local authority has put in a bid for New Deal money but can give no guarantee that they will get it."

Drayton Green is far from being the only school in trouble. Alan Parker, Ealing's director of education, says nearly all of the council's 90 schools need attention and that some are in an even worse state than Drayton Green. Work has already begun in a number of schools.

Mr Parker said: "We could comfortably spend £60m without being profligate. We did a lot of work on immediate safety at Drayton Green. It no longer represents a hazard, but we would like to do a big refurbishment."

JUDITH JUDD

Infant tests 'fail to reveal gifted pupils'

CHILDREN SHOULD be given tougher tests when they start school to identify high-flyers, MPs were told yesterday.

So-called baseline assessment tests for pupils aged four and five were too crude to identify the potential of the brightest pupils, the Commons education select committee heard. Experts on gifted children told MPs that up to two-thirds of schools were failing to stretch the 280,000 children thought to have special talents.

The baseline assessment tests are designed to give teachers an idea of pupils' abilities when they start school. But critics of the tests say they put too much pressure on young children.

The tests, which became compulsory for children starting primary school this September, assess pupils' ability to recognise and write the numbers 1 to 10, write their own names, recognise letters by shape and sound, and concentrate without supervision for 10 minutes.

Ian McNiff, chairman of the pressure group Children of High Intelligence and head-teacher of a Hampshire primary school, said the tests measured children's abilities, not their potential. He said: "My experience is that the tests do not pick up high potential. Baseline assessment does not show if a child can read a book completely."

He said independent tests at his school had shown that one child in six was in the top 2 per cent of the national ability

range. He said the school was blessed with an unusually gifted year group. "I don't think we know how able children are. It is quite staggering. I have had children come into school with a reading age of 14. I once had a girl who had read *Little Women* at the age of four."

The group is devising a series of intelligence tests based on computer puzzles and games, designed to spot children with special abilities.

Peter Carey, director of the National Association for Gifted Children, called for government guidelines on the best way to help gifted children.

He warned against pushing gifted children into academic "hot house" schools, and said that "accelerating" children by moving them up one or two years at school could be counter-productive.

Mr Carey said many ordinary comprehensive schools offered an excellent education to very bright children.

He said: "We do have difficulties with some of the less well-run independent prep schools. They seem to be particularly home to highly directed and didactic teaching, which is very stifling of creativity in the very high ability children. A lot of parents feel that small village schools are the answer to their high-ability children, but there is some disappointment when they go in."

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Benetton goes black to lead Kurd protest

THE UNITED colours of Benetton have all turned black in Turkey. Only black clothing is on display in the shopfronts of Benetton's 171 outlets in the country. Some have festooned their windows with black ribbon. The only splash of colour permitted is the red Turkish flag.

But this is not one of the outlandish stunts that have made the Italian clothing giant famous. It is a protest against the Italian government's reluctance to extradite the Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan to Turkey to face trial for terrorist offences. The move does not come from Benetton, but from the owners of the shops in Turkey, which are operated under licence. "It's a very understandable protest and Benetton is making no reaction," said a spokeswoman.

The stunt is just one of a series of gestures against Italy from a furious Turkish public. Italian-made mopeds and washing machines have been burnt on the streets. The Italian

BY JUSTIN HUGGLER
in Istanbul

Embassy has been besieged by protesters. "We will annex Italy," one shouted last week.

Viewers tuning into Italian cable television channels found an announcement from Turkey's state-run cable operator explaining that it had cut the stations' broadcasts in protest.

Mr Ocalan and his Kurdistan Workers' Party are loathed in Turkey, where they are blamed for the deaths of 30,000 civilians. Last week, the Turkish Prime Minister, Mesut Yilmaz, threatened Italy with Turkey's "eternal hostility" if it did not hand over Mr Ocalan.

That hostility is visible on the streets. "We're having a boycott on their products, we won't buy a thing from them," are frequent comments. Italian people are no longer welcome, and Rome has warned its citizens to avoid travel in Turkey.

Benetton believes that it will not be hit by a boycott, as 95 per

cent of the products that it sells in Turkey are produced in the country. However, a domestic car manufacturer, Tofas, a joint venture with Italy's Fiat, has already had 1,000 orders cancelled. "For a company which produces 100,000 cars a year, 1,000 can be excused in the name of a national cause, but we are concerned that this loss will grow," a company official said.

The European Union Commission has threatened economic sanctions if the boycott is backed by the Turkish government. Turkey's defence ministry said it would rule Italy out of future defence contracts.

Bitterness spread on to the football pitch when Uefa decided earlier this week to postpone a football match between the Turkish champions, Galatasaray, and Juventus of Turin, because Italian players feared for their safety.

When supporters of Mr Ocalan held a march in central Istanbul last week, angry Turkish bystanders attacked them.



Mothers of Turkish soldiers killed fighting the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) demonstrating outside the Italian Consulate in Istanbul EPA

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Turkish coalition sunk by scandal

TURKEY'S government fell from power yesterday as the country remained embroiled in a bitter dispute with Italy over the fate of a Kurdish rebel leader. Hours before the government lost a parliamentary vote of no-confidence, it had seemed to be making moves to ease tensions with Rome over the extradition of Abdullah Ocalan, leader of the Kurdistan Workers party (PKK).

Turkey's parliament voted 314-214 against Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz's coalition. Mr Yilmaz had been expected to lose the no-confidence vote, brought by opposition parties, after he was accused of corruption in the privatisation of a state bank.

Shortly before voting commenced, the government's senior spokesman was reported to have offered a compromise in Turkey's worsening dispute with Italy by saying Ankara would accept Mr Ocalan's trial in a third country.

Tensions have been high since Mr Ocalan was arrested in Rome two weeks ago. The PKK wants autonomy for Kurds in south-eastern Turkey, but Ankara considers it a terrorist organisation and holds Mr Ocalan responsible for the deaths of 30,000 Turkish civilians.

Turkey had expected Mr Ocalan's extradition to be a formality, and was incensed when Italy said it would consider Mr Ocalan's request for political asylum.

A Rome court overturned Turkey's arrest warrant on the ground that Italian law forbids extradition in cases where the accused might face the death penalty.

Mr Yilmaz on Tuesday suggested Turkey would accept Mr Ocalan's extradition to Germany instead, as Bonn also has an arrest warrant for Mr Ocalan. But, so far, Germany has insisted it will not request the PKK chief's extradition.

In a new twist to the diplomatic crisis, it emerged yesterday that arrival in Rome of the PKK leader had been part

BY JUSTIN HUGGLER
in Istanbul
FRANCES KENNEDY
in Rome
AND KATHERINE BUTLER
in Brussels

of a plan to try to bring an end to the Kurdish rebellion. A small group of Italian left-wing MPs said they had brought him to Italy in the hope that he would launch a new peace initiative from there.

Ramon Mantovani, a member of the Refoundation party, admitted he had travelled with Mr Ocalan from Moscow to Rome. The disclosure comes as a severe embarrassment to the Italian Prime Minister, Massimo d'Alema, who insisted that Italy was "an innocent victim" in the affair.

Lawyers for the Kurdish leader are now said to be optimistic he will be granted political asylum and allowed to remain in Italy indefinitely.

In Brussels, Nato officials dismissed suggestions that they put pressure on Turkey to ease its war of words with Italy. But sources admitted there was mounting concern about the sudden deterioration of relations between the two Nato allies - and the consequences of the row for Turkey's EU membership bid.

On Tuesday, the European Commission waded in on Italy's side, threatening Turkey with retaliatory trade sanctions. Nato is worried that the new setback in the EU's shaky relations with Ankara will lead to further political isolation of a key military power that the West can ill afford to alienate.

EU heads of government, many of whom are already deeply hostile to Turkey's accession, will be presented with a damning progress report from the Commission when they meet in Vienna in two weeks. The report cites "persistent human rights violations" linked to the Kurdish question, and "major shortcomings" in the treatment of Turkey's minorities.

Government makes return to Berlin

BELOW THE stained-glass murals of muscular workers and pretty women of immaculate peasant stock, history was made yesterday, when the government of united Germany held its first meeting in Berlin since 1945.

In a symbolic outing to the old capital, Gerhard Schröder's cabinet marched through a gateway rescued from the Prussian royal palace, and into the building which was used by the former East German leader Erich Honecker. There, they

BY IMRE KARACS
in Bonn

took up seats around a large table and discussed ways of tackling youth unemployment.

A new chancellery being built by the river Spree will be delayed by at least three months, so the first meeting cannot be held there until next October. Meanwhile, Mr Schröder will be working from a cavernous office adjacent to Honecker's, but will live in a villa in what was west Berlin.

JP 11/20/98



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BY JUSTIN HUGGER
in Istanbul
FRANCIS KENNEDY
in Rome
AND KATHERINE BUTLER
in Brussels

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BY MARK KURVIS
in Bonn

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"watcher", but will be
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PoWs set to take war claim to Blair

FORMER PRISONERS of war
held by the Japanese are
threatening to sue the Gov-
ernment for compensation if
their claims are rejected in a
Tokyo court today.

Representatives of 25,000
former Allied PoWs and civilian
internees will gather in the
Tokyo District Court this morn-
ing to hear the judgment on
their demand for compensation
of \$22,000 (£13,500) each for
suffering endured at the hands
of their Japanese captors dur-
ing the Second World War.

Lawyers for the group said
last night they were pessimistic
about the outcome of the case,
but that they planned to take
their legal struggle to the
British courts if it failed today.

"There is an increasing mood
of anger against the British
Government, and a feeling that
we are banging our heads
against a brick wall... In Japan,"
the group's British lawyer, Mar-
tyn Day, said in Tokyo last night.
"We're coming to the view that
much of the blame for the fail-
ure to gain justice for the PoWs
and internees lies at the door of
the... Government."

The Japanese government
has never disputed the PoWs'
claims of beatings, sexual as-
saults, torture, deprivation and
abuse during their captivity.
But both the Japanese and
British governments insist that
issues of compensation were
settled in the San Francisco
Treaty of 1952, which exempted
Japan from further repara-
tions. At the time, former
British PoWs received £78.50 for
their sufferings in captivity.

The PoWs have always
claimed that the official British
stance reflects political expedi-
ency and a desire to avoid
offending Japan, which is a
valuable trading partner of the
UK and an investor.

But now they believe they

BY RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
in Tokyo

have found a loophole in the
treaty, which places responsi-
bility for claiming compensation
with the British Government.

A clause in the San Francisco
Treaty stated that Britain is
entitled to claim more compen-
sation if Japan should subse-
quently reach a more generous
settlement with another country
- as it did with several countries,
including Burma and Switzer-
land, during the 1950s.

Recently, Keith Martin, a
former civilian internee and a
plaintiff in the case, discov-
ered in the Public Record Office
confidential some Foreign Of-
fice correspondence dating
from 1955, which noted this
possibility but ruled out
further claims "on general
grounds of foreign relations,
despite the possibility of do-
mestic political embarrass-
ment in connection with Allied
prisoners of war".

The case was taken up per-
sonally by the Prime Minister,
Tony Blair, during his visit to
Tokyo last January when he ap-
pealed to British people to put
the past behind them.

Despite a co-ordinated pub-
lic relations campaign by the two
governments and the visit to
Britain of the Japanese Em-
peror last May, the issue re-
fuses to go away.

"Tony Blair... assured us
that he has the political will to
pursue this case if it is within
the Government's legal power,"
Mr Day said. "We're very clear
that there is a case."

The verdict was due just
hours before a summit meeting
between the Japanese Prime
Minister, Keizo Obuchi, and
the Chinese President, Jiang
Zemin, who is also pressing
Tokyo over wartime atrocities
perpetrated in Asia.



A woman and her son yesterday surveying the remains of their house ruined by last week's earthquakes in Ninglang Autonomous County, in China's south-western Yunnan province. The twin quakes, measuring 5.0 and 6.2 on the Richter scale, killed three people and injured 1,500.

Christians call day of action in India

AN EPIDEMIC of violence
against Christians in India
has prompted an ecumenical group
to declare a "day of action" on
4 December, when Christian
schools and colleges across
the country will close in protest.

Last Sunday, about 40 armed
gangs forced their way into St
Thomas Evangelical Church in
Mullai, near Mangalore, in the
southern state of Karnataka.
They broke up a communion
service, attacking the congrega-
tion, which consisted mostly
of women and children, and
beat the Indian pastor.

This was the first attack in
Karnataka, a state with a sub-
stantial Christian minority. It
follows attacks on Christian
communities in other parts of the
country, which have multiplied
since the Hindu nationalist
Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)
came to power eight months ago.

Churches have been de-
stroyed, congregations broken
up, schools vandalised, Bibles
burnt and prayer halls looted. In
September, in the northern state
of Madhya Pradesh, five nuns
were abducted from their con-
vent and gang-raped. There
have been few arrests for any of
these crimes.

BY PETER POPHAM
in Delhi

The reason for the increase in
attacks is plain: the BJP's
grassroots supporters include
extremist Hindu zealots who
have seized the opportunity of-
fered by BJP rule to pursue
their own brutal agenda with-
out fear of legal consequences.
Organisations such as
Bajrang Dal, set up after the de-
molition of the Babri Masjid
mosque at Ayodhya in 1992,
the Vishwa Hindu Parishad
and the RSS have long thrived
on Hindu paranoia about the
"divisive" and "oppressive" ac-

tivities of India's minorities. In
the past the target was gener-
ally the far larger Muslim com-
munity, but as the BJP cannot
risk alienating the Muslim vote
for electoral reasons, the focus
has switched to the 23 million
Christians.

The violence has been
accompanied by anti-Christian
rhetoric, with the Hindu groups
voicing their view that foreign
missionaries should be ex-
pelled. A leading figure in the
RSS, considered to be the most
disciplined of the extremist
groups, said the recent gang-
rape of nuns was due to "the
anger of patriotic Hindu youth
against anti-nationalism".

Against this backdrop, Christians
across India have come to-
gether to demonstrate in what
may be the most effective way
they can - by shutting down
their schools and colleges.

India's Christians are a di-
verse community. Sixty per-
cent are so-called "Dalits", the
"Untouchables", or what used to be
called "Untouchables". Chris-
tians in the south-western state
of Kerala are one of the oldest
congregations in the world.

Another 15 to 20 per cent of
Christians are tribal people,
many in the north-east where in
some states they are the ma-
jority. But it is in the Christian
missionary schools and colleges that
the strongest target

on the country. It is the major-
ity Hindu community that gets
most benefit. Christian stu-
dents at such institutions
amount to 10 per cent of the in-
take at the most, and sometimes
as little as 3 per cent.

The shutdown will be the
first such action by the Chris-
tian community as a whole. Until
recently Christians in India
have felt little threatened.

"Christians have had a lot of
trust in their rulers," said John
Dayal, convener of the new
forum, "and they forgot that the
state and the polity in India are
becoming more vicious, and
that this is not a state from
which we can expect generosi-
ty - or even the rule of law."

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Amar Alami (left) at an Arab fund-raising event in London in 1991. Police accept she did not plant the London bombs

Riddle of man behind Israeli embassy bomb

CONVINCED THAT they were "set up" by an agent working for Israel, two Palestinians imprisoned for conspiring to bomb the Israeli embassy in London in 1994 have produced an astonishing portrait of the man they claim was really responsible for the explosion - an Arab who called himself Reda Moghrabi but who is unknown to every major guerrilla group in the Middle East.

Sketches of the man - drawn at the request of *The Independent* by a professional artist in separate sittings with Samar Alami and Jawad Botmi in their prisons in the north of England - show an almost identical image: that of a dark-skinned man in his 40s with a lined face, short, black fringe, prominent

BY ROBERT FISK
Middle East Correspondent

eyebrows and nose, and staring eyes.

At their trial and in the two years since, Alami and Botmi have protested their innocence of the bombing, insisting that the explosion in July 1994 - in which, remarkably, no one was killed - could only harm the Palestinian cause.

In his summing up before their conviction in 1996, Mr Justice Garland remarked that, so far as the two accused were concerned, Moghrabi "could have been a Mossad agent or a police informer."

The police agree that Alami and Botmi did not actually carry out the bombings but - save for a look through immigration files - have made no further attempt to find Moghrabi. Alami and Botmi were sentenced to 20 years. They were also convicted of conspiring to bomb a building containing the Zionist Federation office in Finchley, north London, a few hours after the embassy bomb - though both proved they were far from the scene of the explosions.

Even before the trial began, however, the Israeli ambassador "congratulated" the police on their arrest of the "terrorists". An Israeli embassy security video-camera that might have identified the faces of the real bombers was apparently not working on the day of the explosion.

Alami first disclosed Moghrabi's name towards the end of the court hearing - 200 hours of evidence that contained enough errors and interruptions to raise serious questions about the convictions

- and insisted, with Botmi, that she knew nothing about the embassy attack. Today they are convinced, in Alami's words, that "Moghrabi or someone with him set us up from the beginning, either deliberately or to protect themselves from being caught".

Moghrabi - who must have been well known to dozens of Palestinians in London where he attended political discussions and poetry readings at meetings of the Arab Club - apparently worked in the Gulf in the late 1980s and settled in Kuwait until fleeing when the Iraqi army invaded in 1991.

Alami said that she heard rumours that he may have married an English woman in Birmingham; she remembers being given his telephone contact with a prefix 021 (then the dialling code for Birmingham) but says she did not keep the number.

At their 1996 trial, neither Alami nor Botmi - respectively chemical and electronic engineers - attempted to hide their own dabbling in experiments which, however preposterous, were intended to assist Palestinian groups in Lebanon and the occupied territories.

They admitted trying to construct miniature aircraft that would carry bombs across the Lebanese frontier to Israel - in the course of an experiment in the Peak District they almost blew up a tree.

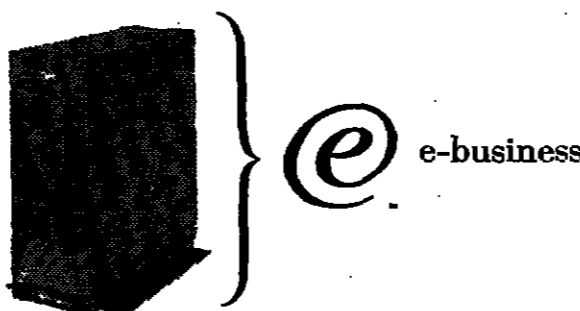
Alami was also found in possession of explosives as well as two guns which she said she was keeping for a Palestinian who feared assassination in London.

Bomber who never was.
Review, front

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Iraq sees hope in UN decision

IRAQ HAS welcomed "as positive and encouraging" the decision by the United Nations Security Council not to blame it in the dispute over the handing over of documents to weapons inspectors.

An official said: "This shows the radical position which Britain wanted to adopt with the backing of the United States did not find listening ears at the Security Council." Earlier the Russians blocked a statement drafted by Britain that would have made clear Iraq had not complied with its promise to co-operate with the UN Special Committee (Unscoc) on eliminating weapons. The Iraqi pledge prevented air strikes on 14 November, when US bombers were already in the air.

The official added: "America and Britain have always been united in taking radical stands against Iraq. This is no surprise to us, because they hold enmity against Iraq, but these two countries are not the only ones at the Council. There are other states which have weight and influence, like Russia, China and France."

At the UN in New York the Security Council president,

BY PATRICK COCKBURN

Peter Burleigh, admitted it was split. "We have not reached any definitive conclusions this evening. So these discussions will continue but this is not a very encouraging start."

Iraq has sent three letters to the Security Council saying 10 out of 12 documents demanded by Richard Butler, the head of Unscoc, are irrelevant, unavailable or concern Iraqi national security.

Sergei Lavrov, Russia's UN representative, said he wanted discussion about whether the documents really existed before agreeing to a statement such as that drafted by Britain. If the council believes Iraq is co-operating, it has promised a full review of its compliance with UN resolutions. This might lead to an easing of sanctions first imposed in 1990.

Iraq isolated itself on 31 October by ending co-operation with Unscoc and thereby alienating Russia, France and China on the Security Council. It is now trying to reverse its diplomatic losses by portraying the US and Britain as seeking confrontation.

US admiral faces adultery charges

A SENIOR United States naval officer faces multiple counts of adultery and lying in the latest case of sexual misconduct to be acknowledged by the military.

According to the *Washington Times*, which revealed details of the charges yesterday, David Scudi, a rear-admiral who was in charge of the Navy's office of outsourcing and privatisation, has been suspended from his duties in Washington and transferred to the naval base at Norfolk, Virginia.

The case has come to light at a sensitive time, only days before the judiciary committee of the House of Representatives holds a special session to compare the accusations against President Bill Clinton in the Monica Lewinsky affair with the definition and punishment of perjury in other areas of American life.

Among those expected to give evidence are judges, con-

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

victed perjurers and those with experience of handling sexual misconduct cases in the military. Mr Clinton is accused of lying about the affair under oath and obstructing justice, and the committee is considering whether to recommend impeachment.

According to the *Washington Times*, David Scudi is only the second admiral to have been charged with criminal offences since the 1950s. A preliminary hearing is to be held next month to decide whether the case should proceed to court martial.

Scudi, 54 and married, is charged with two counts of adultery, giving false statements, obstruction of justice and violation of military ethics. He is accused of liaisons with a defence contractor and a civilian Navy employee.

مكتبة الامم

Slum project brings hope to India's Untouchables

DELHI'S WEALTH sucks the poor out of the countryside in huge numbers. They arrive from all corners of the country, desperate to improve their lot. And this city does a deal with them: wash our dishes, fling our laundry, walk our dogs, build our office blocks, sweep our streets. To that extent, you exist. But there is nowhere for you to live.

Public housing in Delhi is utterly inadequate. And for the poor villagers who roll into town in their thousands, there is not the ghost of a chance of finding a "pukka" house.

So when public land or marginal land along rivers or open drains or railway tracks is not watched over with great vigilance, villagers build new villages on it - gruesome parodies of where they came from, homes made of plastic, sacking and flimsy wood, communities lacking drains or running water or electricity, crammed together as tightly as possible.

These "unauthorised colonies", which may contain 4 million of Delhi's roughly 11

FRONTLINE DELHI

million people, can be demolished at any time. Their survival depends on the patronage of a slum landlord-cum-politician who does what is useful in terms of bulksheesh and intimidation to keep away the wrecking ball. In return, when elections come around (next week here), he is guaranteed the colony's block vote.

It is a singular way to develop your capital city. It produces virulent epidemics and many other evils. But for Delhi's middle class there is one great compensation: a permanent bank of cheap domestics.

Delhi's slum problem is growing worse all the time, and in the past 10 years the number of unauthorised colonies has doubled from 750 to 1,500. But the work of a Delhi-based organisation called Asha ("Hope") proves that the slums are not beyond redemption.

Most of Kiran Martin's fellow medical students wanted

either to find a job abroad or to start their own private hospital. Dr Martin was different. "I've always been completely uninterested in money," she says, "and I had a very strong desire to work among the poorest of the poor." So 10 years ago, already an experienced paediatrician, she walked into a terrible Delhi slum called Dr Ambedkar Basti and, after difficult discussions with the slum's intensely suspicious boss, set up her first clinic.

That year, cholera raged through Delhi's slums and, as healthcare provision was negligible (like every other public service), Dr Martin found herself in huge demand. But from the outset, healthcare was only the first step, her foot in the door.

Dr Ambedkar Basti is home to 5,500 Dalits or Untouchables, as poor as they are uneducated. "The conditions were unimaginable," says Dr Martin. "Animals were cohabiting with the people, children and pigs were wallowing together in the mud, children were dying everywhere, there were piles of garbage." The task



Sobha, a slum dweller who has trained as a health worker, tending to a baby John McCormico.

Dr Martin gave herself was to build a partnership with the people of Dr Ambedkar Basti so that they could learn how to improve their own situation. "I was not interested merely in service delivery, but in

working with people as partners," she says. "That is much more difficult, but our philosophy is that the poor have so much potential."

Dr Martin gradually evolved her own distinctive approach to

the slums. It consists of recruiting and training community health volunteers within the slum; setting up women's groups through which the women can receive training in the rudiments of health, sani-

tation, community organisation and so on; and at the same time working tirelessly with the political bosses and the city's slum commissioners to cajole, bully and charm them into doing their duty.

"In Dr Ambedkar Basti, the women persuaded me to meet the slum commissioner on their behalf," she remembers. "He came and saw what I was doing there and got the shock of his life. Something happened to him that day. It was the start of a great relationship with this man - he later said this encounter changed his life. Within two months the colony had a proper drain, a tarred road, hand pumps for water and pavements tiled with bricks."

Spurred on by this success, Dr Martin and her colleagues, most of them passionate though not proselytising Christians, have taken their unique programme to more than 20 other slum colonies around Delhi, home to more than 120,000 people. It's a drop in the ocean. But Asha's most successful projects, such as the

colony of Shanti Vihar, show what can happen when the potential of the people is released.

At Shanti Vihar none of the old stigmas of the slums is in evidence. With money funnelled into the colony, largely from the British charity Tearfund, and with intense political pressure applied by Asha, the place has been transformed. Houses are brick-built, lanes are surfaced with concrete with proper drains underneath; 100 per cent of the children go to school; and the place is stunningly clean.

"The transformation is largely the result of Dr Martin's belief in human potential. 'We are all human beings, that should be the basis of how we look at each other,' she says. 'And unless people are trained and organised, no sustained development is possible.'"

More information about Asha can be obtained from Friends of Asha UK, c/o Peter Martin, 137 Kingfishers Road, Ilford, Essex IG3 9QN. Tel 0181 597 0225

PETER POPHAM

Burma fighters resort to mines

BURMA'S MINORITY Karen community, which has experienced a history of oppression at the hands of the military regime in Rangoon, is now facing two lethal hazards.

For the first time in the decades-long war for a Karen state, both sides have started laying land-mines. In addition, Burmese government forces are reported to have started destroying rice crops to starve out the regime's most powerful military opponent, the Karen National Union (KNU).

While the armed wings of most other Burmese ethnic groups have signed ceasefire agreements with the military regime, the Karen has maintained its resistance, operating in the south of the country around the border with Thailand.

The introduction of land-mines risks pushing Burma in the direction of Cambodia, where the legacy of the civil war is seen almost every day as villagers are killed by land-mines. At the height of the Cambodian fighting, land-mines killed and maimed thousands of civilians.

International observers on the Thai-Burmese border say both the Burmese and Karen forces are using land-mines in the fight to gain territory in southern Burma. The military know where the mines are laid, but civilians do not.

The laying of the mines co-

BY STEPHEN VINES
in Hong Kong

incides with the start of the dry season, which is when most military offensives are launched.

Burmese dissidents in Bangkok, capital of neighbouring Thailand, report that government soldiers burnt paddy fields near Tavoy in southern Burma at the beginning of this month to deny the KNU access to rice crops.

Zaw Min, a spokesman for the All Burma Students' Democratic Front in Bangkok, said the destruction occurred just before the villagers were expected to harvest their crops.

"This will have an enormous effect on the villagers because they have no means of supporting themselves other than their crops," he said.

Ethnic minority villagers in the Burmese border areas have suffered a long history of being displaced and attacked. The Karen is Burma's biggest ethnic minority. Others, including Shan and Mon civilians, have been attacked by the Burmese army for supporting separatist armies before they signed the ceasefire agreements in Rangoon.

Stories of rape and slavery inflicted on the ethnic minorities keep surfacing, although the Burmese government claims to have pacified most of the border regions.

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مكتبة الامم

The method in Nat Power's madness

EVER SINCE the last government decided to privatise the electricity generating industry by creating a monopoly National Power has had the reputation of being slower and less sure-footed than its smaller brother PowerGen. When NatPower does move, however, it does not believe in half measures.

Yesterday it announced the disposal of 40 per cent of its generating capacity and a ground-breaking move into electricity retailing through the £180m purchase of Midlands Electricity's supply business.

Vertical integration is the name of the power game these days. All its rivals have done it and now National Power has conceded that the way forward is not only to generate the juice but also supply it into the kitchen. Even so, the tactics employed by Nat Power look high risk, which is why the market fretted and wiped 3 per cent off the shares.

By putting Drax on the block, Nat Power is letting go of the jewel in its crown. The station is the newest, most efficient and cleanest coal-fired station in the land. In return, it expects to get regulatory approval to acquire 2.2 million domestic customers who between them generated profits of £19m for Midland last year.

Factor in the high-priced long-term supply contracts Nat Power also inherits from Midlands and the cost of the acquisition probably works at about £150 a customer. Since Midlands made a profit of only £8.60 a customer last year, it does not take a genius to work out that the payback period could be a rather long one.

But there may be method in Nat Power's apparent madness. Precisely because it is so efficient, Drax should fetch a good price - say £2bn. The alternative was to sell off under-utilised plant for a low price



OUTLOOK

and then watch the buyer turn up the wick, eating further into Nat Power's market position.

The Midlands deal looks harder to square. On the other hand, the margin in electricity is moving away from generating and towards supply. Supposing NatPower can sell its 2.2 million customers extra services, like gas, insurance and perhaps telecoms, the sums may begin to add up. More importantly, ownership of a supply business will provide a natural hedge for the generating arm.

So Keith Henry, NatPower's chief executive, has a story to tell. If he wants the market to buy it, he may have to be prepared to return some, if not all, of the Drax proceeds to investors, rather than spending it on further expansion overseas.

more importantly, the strong pound has finally begun to undermine British competitiveness, making UK firms seem expensive against overseas rivals.

The near-term outlook for UK trade is little better. Although the recent weakening of sterling will provide some respite, it takes time for changes in the exchange rate to feed through into the real economy. It is only now that we are seeing the full consequences of the pound's strength during 1997 and early 1998. Recent cuts in interest rates will also help. But again, it can take as long as two years before lower interest rates really make a difference.

All this suggests the outlook for 2000 and beyond may not be too bad. In 1999, on the other hand, the UK economy looks like it's in for an exceedingly rough ride. Back in the US, the economy and the stock market are booming, but corporate earnings are falling - all this against a world economy which is slowing dramatically. The picture is a deeply confusing one. In such circumstances it is no wonder many are beginning to question whether Mr Greenspan has got his policy stance right. Could this be a repeat of 1987,

when central bankers over reacted to the stock market crash, thereby accentuating the latter stages of the boom and deepening the subsequent recession?

It would be disingenuous of this column, which along with many other commentators, urged Mr Greenspan and other central bankers to make sharp cuts in interest in response to the global turmoil, now to turn round and say he's got it all wrong. On the other hand few could have predicted the scale and speed of the recovery in world equity markets. If Mr Greenspan thought stock markets irrationally exuberant two years ago, when he first coined the phrase, what on earth does he make of them now?

institutional investors have not only suffered a painful defeat. They are also about £40m worse off.

Aslec is an obscure manufacturer of power drives that earlier this year became the focal point of a debate of high principle in the City: can a majority shareholder bully others into accepting a bid for their shares? The saga started in January when Emerson made an informal bid to buy out the minority shareholders at 111p. If they refused, it would pack the board with its appointees and cut Aslec's dividend.

Since then, Aslec's share price has headed south as the company was hit by the slump in the Far East. Since January, profit forecasts for the company have halved. The slump was so severe that Emerson's 25p a share bid is more than double Aslec's share price immediately before the bid.

True, institutional investors can question the judgement of the independent directors, who yesterday meekly accepted the bid despite having rejected 111p a share as derisory earlier in the year. However, the fund managers should face some penetrating questions about putting their trustees' money on the line for a matter of principle.

Emerson/Astec

SO MUCH for shareholder power. Emerson Electric, the heavyweight of the US electronics industry, yesterday landed the knockout punch in its battle with London's fund managers by launching a bid recommended by independent directors, to buy out the minority shareholders in Astec (BSR). Eleven months after stepping into the ring with Emerson,

Carlton picks Asda man, 34, as chief

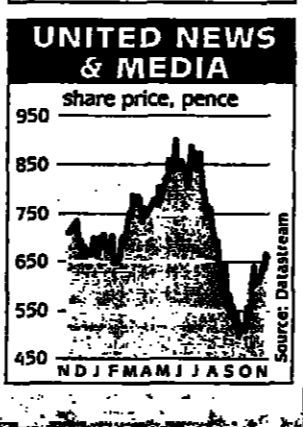
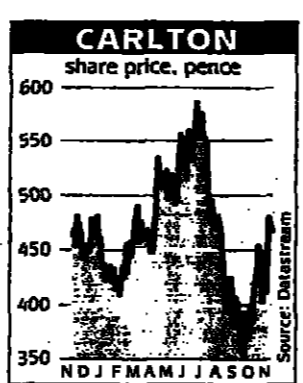
BY NIGEL COPE AND PETER THAL LARSEN

CARLTON Communications, the television company led by Michael Green, yesterday appointed a 34-year-old marketing specialist as its new chief executive.

Steven Carr, who is currently marketing director at Asda, will join Carlton at the start of next year. He will almost certainly be the youngest chief executive of a FTSE 100 company to replace John Birt as head of Carlton's marketing, who announced his departure in September.

The appointment surprises analysts who said Carlton was looking for an experienced media executive. But Carlton said Carr was the best person for the job. "We wanted someone who is on the way up and taking their mark at Asda," he company said. "Mr Carr is a man who has shown us that he can deliver results."

The decision to appoint Carr, a former Asda executive, is seen as a move to bring in a marketing expert to help Carlton compete with other television companies for advertising revenue.



United News & Media share price, pence

ND J F M A M J J A S O N

Rhône Poulenc and Hoechst finalise £21bn drugs merger

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

FRENCH AND German chemicals giants Rhône-Poulenc and Hoechst are scouring the Franco-German border for a neutral site for the headquarters of their combined businesses as negotiators prepared for a final round of meetings that could lead to their £21bn (£21bn) merger being unveiled next week.

With speculation mounting that a deal is close, the two groups yesterday put out a formal statement confirming that they are in discussions about combining their life sciences businesses. The merger would create the second biggest drugs company after America's Merck, leap-frogging Britain's Glaxo-Wellcome in terms of sales.

with Morgan Stanley and Lazards advising Hoechst. In a further effort to avoid tramping on national sensitivities, it is believed that an outside agency has been brought in to work on a neutral name for the combined operation on the model of Novartis, the product of the Swiss Ciba-Geigy-Sandoz merger.

Observers said there were clear signs of tensions between the French and Germans, with the French unhappy at suggestions that the Germans had the upper hand in negotiations. Hoechst chief executive Jürgen Darmann will head the management board, with Rhône's Mr Fourtou being kicked upstairs to the supervisory board. The top job at the larger drugs division has gone

to Richard Markham, the American who heads up Hoechst Marion Roussel. The agro-chemical division will be based in Lyons and headed by Frenchman Alain Godard.

Hoechst is to push ahead with the plans outlined last week to spin off its industrial chemicals businesses into a new quoted company called Celanese.

Analysts are highly critical of the deal. Both companies have pursued similar strategies aimed at reducing their exposure to bulk chemicals and building up their pharmaceutical operations through acquisitions. However, neither has any blockbuster drugs in the pipeline.

"This is a merger born out of weakness," said one analyst.

larger drugs division has gone

Licence deal gives ITV firms £90m a year

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

SIR ROBIN BIGGAM, chairman of the Independent Television Commission (ITC), yesterday did something that few watchdogs ever do: he handed a cheque worth more than £90m a year to a handful of the ITV companies he regulates. At the same time, he gave digital television a major boost by giving the companies an incentive to attract as many viewers to their digital services as possible.

The decision has a major impact on the finances of some of Britain's largest television companies. The hotel and television group Granada expects the decision to save it an average of £40m a year until 2008. Lord Holford's United News & Media will save £23m a year. Carlton Communications, the television group run by Michael Green, will be £22m better off next year.

Meanwhile, GMTV, the struggling breakfast television operator which is owned by a consortium of companies, was handed a lifeline that will probably save it its closure.

The bonanza is the result of the opaque process under which ITV companies were allowed to renew their regional licences in the hope of reducing the amount they had agreed to pay when they won the licences in 1992.

In a complex process that has kept hundreds of bankers, analysts and media executives occupied for months, the ITC worked out what the different licences would fetch if they were auctioned again today. All in all, eight of the 11 franchises were handed reductions in their annual payments.

In this case, the ITV companies cannot lose. If the ITC

News Analysis: Double bonanza for television companies as franchise payments are cut and incentives offered to attract digital viewers

chose not to award them a lower amount, they could reject the decision. Nevertheless, there were a few disappointed faces yesterday. United News & Media gripped that the savings were "at the low end of expectations" and turned down the ruling on its Anglia franchise. It is still weighing up whether to accept the new terms for Meridian.

But Carlton was upbeat. Nigel Wainwright, the company's director in charge of broadcast, said: "With a lower tax burden we can compete more effectively in the expanding television market place."

Border Television rejected a ruling which would have increased its payments while Carlton dismissed the new terms for its Central franchise.

Analysis complained that the ITC's calculations were opaque: "It's pretty inconsistent. There is a whopping great reduction for GMTV while Anglia gets nothing," one said.

The ruling also changes the way in which ITV companies will pay for their licences in future. Rather than hand over large lump sums every year, their payments will be more closely linked to advertising revenues.

Under the current terms, two-thirds of the payment comes from the lump sum with the remainder coming from a measure of sales known as percentage of qualifying revenue (PQR) - basically, advertising. The new regime reduces the cash element to 25

per cent with the bulk based on PQR.

The terms are derived from a realistic assessment of the value of these licences in an increasingly competitive market," Sir Robin said. "If revenues fall below our expectations, the tender payments will fall accordingly."

More importantly, however, the new structure offers a major fillip to digital television because the new medium, which was launched in Britain in the past few months, will not be taxed in the way that ITV currently is. Under the new regime, viewers who watch ITV's digital broadcast will not be included in the PQR calculation. This means that, as digital penetration increases, licence costs will fall.

This "digital dividend" could be substantial. The ITC forecasts were based on the assumption that 50 per cent of ITV viewers will be watching the digital service by 2008. But many media analysts think this figure will be much higher - reducing the costs of analogue licences even further. Sir Robin said yesterday he expected payments to go "way, way down".

However, the ITC's apparent generosity will be short-lived. The ITV companies who renewed their licences this year did so because they had bid too much at the time of the auction. The reverse is true of the other franchises: they will be able to wait until 2001 before they have

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There is much to fear from Japan rescue plan

WHAT IF the world is urging the wrong solution to Japan's problems? The political upheaval in Japan this week has led to fears that the emergency economic package now before the Diet might be threatened. But there surely should be a deeper concern: maybe it is the wrong package.

I have just been looking at two things: the outline of the package itself and the deterioration of Japan's fiscal position. Neither is a pretty sight.

The reports of the package have focused almost entirely on three of its facets: the efforts to shore up the financial system; the fiscal boost; and the novel idea, already introduced in an earlier version of the plan, of "helicopter money" - giving spending vouchers to the under 16-year-olds and to people eligible for public welfare assistance, to be spent within six months.

Each of those aspects of the plan has been greeted with various concerns: whether, for example, the banking system will really be able to re-establish public confidence; whether the public works/tax cuts are well targeted; whether the gift vouchers are really a sensible way of using tax revenue. (The administrative charges for running the scheme will mop up more than 12 per cent of the total cost.)

The reports of the scheme did not pay much attention, however, to its wider aim, which is to start a refocusing of the entire Japanese economy. Until I read through the provisional translation of the outline I had not realised that there is a lot of detailed planning going into the redirection of growth away from production of goods and towards improvements in lifestyle.

As any visitor to the country will appreciate there are many aspects of the lifestyle which are very attractive: the cleanliness, order and safety of its cities for example. But there are also aspects that could clearly be better - where people do not live as well as they should. So it is encouraging that the package includes a plan to double the size of living space. Larger houses would not only enormous-



HAMISH MCRAE

The problem is that these ideas are hardly credible, given the make-believe tone of the rest of it

ly improve the quality of life; they would also create more space both for additional consumer durables and for additional people. This last point matters. Along with Italy and Germany, Japan has one of the lowest fertility rates of the G7.

The problem is that these ideas are hardly credible, given the make-believe tone of much of the rest of the plan. Thus there are assurances that the economy will achieve growth in 1999. I suppose that is possible, but anyone who has spent time with Japanese officials will know that sometimes official words mean nothing. If, therefore, the economic objectives are not met, the very sensible social and lifestyle objectives may also be undermined.

The dangers that arise if the economic objectives are not met grow almost daily. Just yesterday, it emerged from the Ministry of Fi-

nance that Japan might face a £50bn revenue shortfall from lower receipts from corporation taxation. MoF officials fear that the budget deficit could reach 10 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Now have a look at the graph. It shows the Japanese general government deficit over the last nine years, together with forecasts for the next two. The government was running a surplus 10 years ago and a manageable deficit through the Nineties. But now the country is facing a fiscal catastrophe. A budget deficit of 10 per cent? That is the sort of thing you would expect from Russia. At no time during the entire post-war period has Britain run a deficit on that scale, even when we lost control of public spending in the mid Seventies.

Indeed, the actual position is even worse than the one set out in the graph, which only covers central government. You have to add local government borrowing, which could bring the total public-sector financial balance to 12 per cent of GDP in 1999. No wonder Japan's debt rating has been downgraded by Moody's, the United States rating agency.

If a fiscal policy appears not to be credible, people freeze. Lenders freeze, consumers freeze; companies freeze. People know that whatever is happening will have to be reversed, and save for the coming rainy day. That is precisely the danger Japan faces now. Conventional wisdom holds that given the overriding need to boost demand, it is right to run a larger fiscal deficit. The

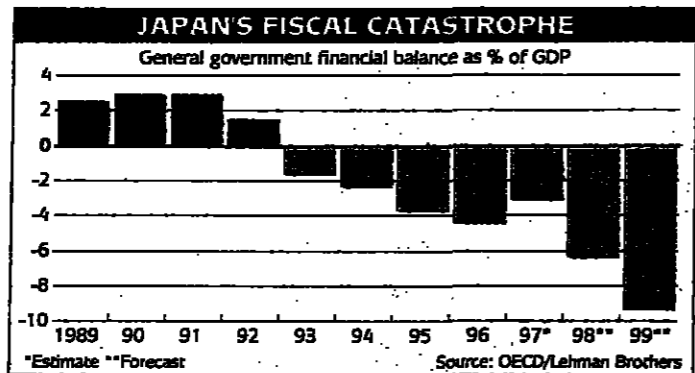
dreadful truth may be that this is wrong: that running a deficit which is not credible will actually have the perverse effect of cutting demand.

This will take place for several reasons. Most obviously if the larger deficit were to push up long-term interest rates, the additional borrowing by the public sector would be likely to be offset by lower borrowing by the private sector. This has not happened yet. There has been a widening of the "Japan premium" in the financial markets - the rate at which their banks borrow from other banks above the normal inter-bank rate. That reflects foreign concern about their credit-worthiness. Concern about the government's credit-worthiness (as opposed to the banks') has not yet pushed up bond yields, which are ludicrously low. The levels of domestic savings are so enormous that funding the deficit is not yet a financial problem, and it may never become one.

But there is a difference between a financial problem and a psychological one. If Japanese people feel the government is being irresponsible by borrowing so much, they may themselves simply save more - and thereby offset any fiscal boost the additional spending might generate.

In short, the Keynesian pump-priming being urged on Japan may not work. Worse, it may actually have the perverse effect of cutting demand because of its impact on confidence. Everyone knows that a lot of Japanese public investment is of poor quality. If a country borrows for stupid projects people realise that sooner or later they will have to foot the bill.

So what is to be done? The answer is to deregulate and to cut personal taxation: to do what the US and Britain have done to convince ordinary people that it is reasonable that if they work hard they should enjoy the fruits of that work. It is a novel idea in Japan. But expect to hear much more of it in the months to come. Meanwhile, outsiders should resist urging the Japanese government to borrow more money: they will not have to pay back the debts.



Tina Turner wins despite Iron Maiden's charms

MARTIN GOODCHILD, recently installed managing partner of the accountants Pannell Kerr Forster, proudly sports two gold discs on his office wall, both million-sellers by head-banging heavy metal heroes Iron Maiden.

It turns out that Mr Goodchild helped to set up a management consultancy called Sanctuary whose chief client is Iron Maiden. He is no longer a director, but still retains an affection for the link.

So is Mr Goodchild a head-banger himself, I ask?

"No, no, I'm much more Tina Turner."

ONE BRANCH of the Rothschild family has put Exbury Garden Nurseries up for sale, a world-famous centre in the New Forest for propagating exotic rhododendrons and azaleas.

The nurseries are being sold by Edmund "Eddie" de Rothschild, second cousin to Sir Evelyn de Rothschild, chairman of the eponymous investment bank NM Rothschild. Edmund's father, Lionel de Rothschild, carved out 70 acres of gardens from the New Forest after the First World War. The nurseries, however, have been so successful - attracting visitors from as far afield as Japan and the United States - that a new owner is needed to fund expansion.

So, if you fancy bidding for one of the world's best growers of camelias and pieris, get your offer in to Simon White of Deloitte & Touche in Southampton, who is handling the sale for the family.

CHARLES ALLEN, chief executive of Granada, startled analysts yesterday

PEOPLE AND BUSINESS BY JOHN WILLCOCK

JAMES CROSBY, the new Halifax chief executive, will have a job and a half to integrate the Birmingham Midshires into the group. Opposition to the recent £750m takeover comes from the most unexpected quarters.

The Save Our Building Societies Campaign has received a letter from a Mrs GE Buckingham of Bridgwater, Somerset. The lady declares herself "pleased to support" the anti-demutualisation movement.

But who is Mrs GE Buckingham? A call to the Bridgwater branch of Birmingham Midshires solves the mystery. "She doesn't work here, but she is the wife of the area manager, Robert Buckingham", a helpful receptionist tells me. Oh dear, Mr Crosby, with friends like that...

when he started enthusing about "soap bubbles". Was the media group about to expand into soaps and detergents, they wondered?

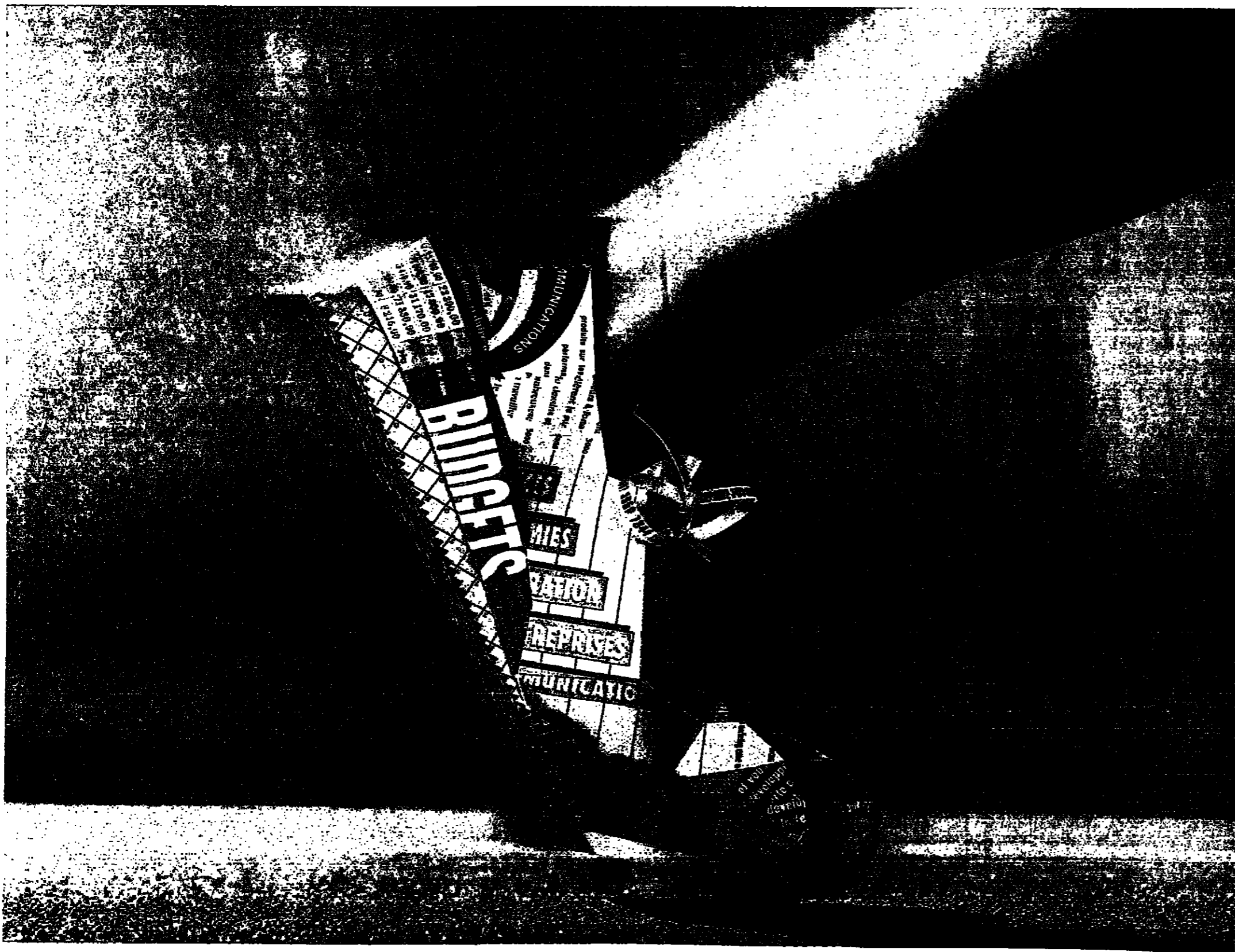
In fact, the broadcasting boss was referring to the practice of spinning off programmes from existing soap operas - such as the recent video of *Coronation Street*. Mr Allen is now pondering a full-length film of *Corry*, he added, for OnDigital, the channel of which Granada owns a half.

COMPANY RESULTS

Name	Turnover (£)	Pre-tax (£)	EPS	Dividend	Pay day	X-div
Adams Pater plc (F)	98.6m (98.5m)	7.0m (10.0m)	11.1p (14.8p)	6.5p (6.0p)	22.01.99	07.12.98
Advanced Power Cables (F)	6.19m (5.28m)	0.530m (0.885m)	3.0p (2.9p)	1.2p (1.2p)	03.02.99	07.12.98
Balliford Industrial Services (F)	16.42m (14.03m)	2.51m (1.74m)	9.8p (8.7p)	1.2p (1.2p)	12.04.99	03.03.99
Bauer Chemicals plc (F)	21.68m (24.72m)	14.02m (2.50m)	8.40p (1.23p)	0.5p (0.5p)	15.01.99	07.12.98
Bristol Water plc (F)	33.47m (31.82m)	7.91m (7.15m)	108.5p (89.5p)	19.44p (18.0p)	14.04.99	07.12.98
Bristol Water Holdings plc (F)	35.91m (40.48m)	8.65m (7.81m)	108.2p (89.2p)	18.50p (17.15p)	14.04.99	07.12.98
Carlisle Systems plc (F)	8.80m (9.30m)	0.643m (0.318m)	2.53p (1.96p)	-	-	-
Citywest Cashless Systems (F)	3.80m (3.25m)	0.140m (0.243m)	0.75p (1.25p)	-	-	-
ICP International (F)	181.63.00m (114.68m)	11.32m (10.70m)	11.28p (10.88p)	2.63p (2.43p)	22.01.99	07.12.98
Granada Group (F)	3.08m (3.24m)	773.0m (881.0m)	80.5p (53.4p)	15.7p (14.5p)	01.04.99	04.01.99
Johnson Matthey (F)	1.783m (1.547m)	63.2m (61.2m)	23.0p (22.1p)	5.70p (5.2p)	01.02.99	07.12.98
Morison Construction Grp (F)	187.81m (156.45m)	7.56m (6.68m)	7.71p (6.86p)	1.96p (1.80p)	04.01.99	07.12.98
National Power (F)	1.352m (1.458m)	217.0m (260.0m)	14.7p (17.1p)	8.4p (8.0p)	06.04.99	07.12.98
ORP (F)	25.32m (11.61m)	7.77m (3.20m)	8.10p (2.5p)	8.4p (2.5p)	08.04.99	07.12.98
Providence Resources (F)	81.0.483m (-)	-	-	-	-	-
Radstone Technology (F)	10.08m (10.08m)	-	-	-	-	-
Sandwich (F)	10.08m (10.08m)	-	-	-	-	-
Tate & Lyle (F)	4.67m (4.42m)	-	-	-	-	-
Viceroy (F)	17.1m (18.77m)	6.47m (0.02m)	4.61p (0.82p)	-	-	-

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SPORT

Playing standards are the highest ever but falling sponsorship and an ongoing civil war threatens the game's future

Dark tale of snooker and strife

By GUY HODGSON

TODAY A cameo will be played out which will illustrate the dark depths snooker is currently exploring. A white-haired, 61-year-old man will arrive at the Liverpool Victoria UK Championships and immediately be monitored by security guards. He can only go to the BBC commentary box and then leave. He cannot visit a cafe, the bar or the press room or take a swim even though the Bournemouth International Centre has leisure facilities.

The man is not a spy or a saboteur but Clive Everton, a journalist and commentator who has been the chief chronicler, an evangelist even, of the sport for 27 years. His crime, according to the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association, is a series of articles that have questioned the wisdom and integrity of the governing body. Hence the restrictions.

Everton, it ought to be added here, is snooker correspondent of this paper's sister publication, the *Independent on Sunday*, but this is not an examination of the rights and wrongs of his case. His treatment is a symptom of a civil war raging through snooker, not the cause. A conflict that threatens the future of the sport.

On the table things could hardly be better. Television viewing figures are holding up so well the BBC has abandoned its policy of placing it in the nether regions of the schedules (the final frames of the UK Championship will be shown live on Sunday) and playing standards are undeniably higher than ever.

"In my heyday I played a man in the first round who potted like he had two broken arms," Steve Davis, the 41-year-old six-times world champion, said quantifying the improvement, "and it wasn't until the quarter-finals that I entertained the thought of losing. Now you turn up and straight out of the traps you are up against a kid who has made five 147s in practice the previous day and who doesn't give a damn about your reputation."

The game is fine, thriving even; it is away from the beige and bright lights that the mood deteriorates. A sport that can command television figures that comfortably outstrip Wimbledon and the Open Golf Championship ought to have companies falling over themselves to sponsor tournaments, but snooker is down to five - Embassy, Benson and Hedges, Regal, Rothmans and Liverpool Victoria. Compare that to the 24 who poured money in between 1986 and 1990 and you can appreciate the decline.

That inevitably means smaller prizes and the winner at the Bournemouth International Centre on Sunday week will get £75,000, £5,000 less than Doug Mountjoy received when he won the UK Championship, snooker's second most important title, 10 years ago.

A year ago Rex Williams attributed the lack of corporate backing to internal squabbling within the WPBSA, but since he reassumed the chairmanship in March 1997 the arguments have got louder and more bitter. Last December the chief executive, Jim McKenzie, was dismissed and will pursue a case of wrongful dismissal in the courts on 11 January; in the summer the head of media relations, Bruce Beckett, and the long-standing tournament director, Ann Yates, left; in June three former world champions, Steve Davis, Terry Griffiths and Dennis Taylor, unsuccessfully pursued a vote of no confidence in the board.

There are other issues, including an ongoing dispute with Benson and Hedges over the alleged behaviour of the WPBSA company secretary, Martyn Blake, at two dinner parties, and relations with the media have become so strained



Clive Everton, commentating at Bournemouth, is confined to the television gantry because of restrictions following articles which questioned the wisdom and integrity of snooker's governing body Peter Jay

that Radio Five Live refuse to carry voice reports from Bournemouth and the Snooker Writers' Association has been re-formed because of alarm at the way the sport is being run. The atmosphere is close to poisonous.

McKenzie's dismissal is seen as the flashpoint in the great war that has followed. In simple terms - and very little is simple in this conflict - it is a difference over whether snooker should be run by professionals or the combination of former players

'The guys on the board are pals of mine. This is not a personal attack, we just feel snooker is not going anywhere'

and small businessmen who hitherto have been in charge.

Most leading players, including the world champion, John Higgins, and the previous two, Ken Doherty and Stephen Hendry, back the Davis-Griffiths-Taylor triumvirate who argue the current WPBSA board do not have the expertise to run a multi-million pound sport and men from the City should be appointed. But there are high-profile supporters of the current regime, too, including John Parrott, Alan McManus and Willie

Thorne, and there was enough of the rank and file with them to defeat June's no-confidence motion by four votes.

The sadness is that it has pitted former friends against each other, which does not bode well for a wholesome atmosphere in the future no matter who is successful. "What upsets me with all the infighting over the years," Taylor, the 1985 champion, said, "is that the guys on the board, people like Bob Close, Rex and Jim Meadowcroft, are great pals of mine. This is not a personal attack, we just feel snooker is not going anywhere."

"It's not about egos, but saving the game. I've had a great living from snooker; I've travelled the world, and it would be nice to think today's youngsters will get the same chance as I did. But that prospect looks doubtful at the moment."

Last week a committee looking into the constitution of the WPBSA published an interim report that recommended the creation of two subsidiary companies to run the commercial affairs of snooker and billiards and be answerable to a new board of 10 members. It is a compromise and might win approval but no one is holding their breath.

Snooker's experience over many years is that conflict is easier to locate than solutions. We are not watching a sport committing suicide, it is too established for that, but it is indulging in self-mutilation.

Davis fights 'boardroom amateurs'

Former world champion seeks solution to a power struggle. By Guy Hodgson

STEVE DAVIS is a reluctant revolutionary. The administration of snooker, he says, is boring and ought to be left to professionals, yet for much of 1998 he has been at loggerheads with the sport's governing body, the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association. Events can make firebrands out of anybody.

In June, Davis, along with fellow former world champions, Terry Griffiths and Dennis Taylor, unsuccessfully tried to oust the current WPBSA board with a vote of no confidence and now he and they are preparing for change from within by getting elected on to the executive. The atmosphere, he says, "has not been pleasant".

Davis has been provoked into action because he believes snooker has become too big to be handled by former players. "My chief problem is that we have had amateurs in the boardroom who have made decisions which make them look like incompetents," he said. "Which is unfair because all the people who have been on the board for generations have had the game's interest at heart. But if they appear that way your problems start."

Snooker has many grievances at the moment but the one most pertinent hits the pocket. This has

manifested itself most notably in the lack of sponsors for tournaments and a drop in prize-money. Get those right and the rest might, just might, clear themselves up.

"Sponsorship is a funny thing and sports go in and out of fashion," Davis said, "but I think snooker's here to stay and I think we are failing to get our foot in the door of bigger companies. We haven't got the right chief executive who can talk to these people at the proper level. Snooker players pot balls, they

spend their lives training to do that, it's unfair to expect them to do more. They are not good in the boardroom or as salesmen. We have never given people from business a proper chance of having an interest in our game and it has to be tried."

Davis can at least see some light in the interim report published last week by the WPBSA's constitutional review committee which proposes wholesale changes to the game's government structure, setting up businesses to run snooker and bil-

liards that will report to a reconstructed board. "If those proposals were given a chance they could be the answer because the board as we know it would relinquish power anyway," he said.

"I don't know if the report will be accepted, but it could be a way forward as it will cut through the problems that have upset the players, the them-and-us situation and the lack of business acumen. At the same time, control will be retained by the players. Hopefully the board will think that way, too."

The WPBSA and their chairman, Rex Williams, preferred not to discuss the current situation. "No interviews or comments will be made by the association regarding any political matters in our sport while the Liverpool Victoria UK Championship is taking place," a statement read, "in order that our sponsors, players and the public can enjoy this prestigious tournament without any external distractions."

"Should anyone else associated with our sport wish to risk losing a loyal and valued sponsor by making political comments at this time there is nothing we can do to stop them. Though this, of course, would be absurd and reckless and is something that would be pointed out to our members."



Head to head: Steve Davis (left) and chairman Rex Williams

Tremors suggest a football earthquake lies ahead

WITH A cigar in one hand and a Scotch in the other, a man who has my affection and respect was going on about how it feels personally to be around in a sporting era when every week seems to bring fresh evidence of instability. "This may be carrying things a bit far," he said, "but I imagine it's like living in an earthquake zone, feeling a tremor beneath your feet and fearing that a disaster is about to happen."

The tremors felt in English football this week, and nobody should take them lightly, spread from the sale of two Premier League players, Andy Impey from West Ham to Leicester and Duncan Ferguson from Everton to Newcastle, against the wishes of the team managers. In Ferguson's case, it appears



KEN JONES

that a £7m deal was put through without prior consultation with Everton's manager, Walter Smith, raising the thought that his position is now untenable. Harry Redknapp

knew about West Ham's decision to sell Impey but there was nothing he could do to prevent it happening.

These deals have told us something about the financial situation in English football to which the majority of supporters are oblivious and give no second thought when calling belligerently for changes in personnel.

The truth, and a hard truth it is for their supporters to swallow, is that the majority of clubs in the Premier League are facing up to the difficulties caused by salary escalation, exaggerated transfer values and contractual obligations to players who are no longer serving any useful purpose.

By way of relief from the screaming meemies induced by television

hyperbole, I spend some time talking to people in sport who can be relied on for objective appraisal. All agree that sport, especially football, is on dangerous ground and that there may be a day up ahead when the tremors we are feeling now develop into a financial catastrophe. "It's often said these days that football has never been more fashionable, and I suppose that's a fact," one of them said, "but the one sure thing about fashion is that it changes."

It's anybody's guess how close we are to upheaval but the time cannot be far off when sport falls completely into the hands of entrepreneurs who hold no respect for its traditions and ancient values. Earlier this week I spoke with a

former rugby union international of much standing who views with trepidation the very real possibility that BBC television will next year lose the Five Nations Championship to Rupert Murdoch. "If that happens there are bound to be changes in the way rugby is played," he said. "High-scoring games, perhaps unlimited substitutions, players selected solely as place kickers. Instead of two halves, four quarters to accommodate television commercials."

There are, no doubt, plenty of people who regard any change as change for the better. They can point to how things were and argue that nobody can clearly remember the extent of opposition to live football on television or how long it is

(37 years) since footballers in England had no say in their personal futures and were restricted to a maximum wage of £20 per week. They can ridicule the old Football League's refusal to allow their champions into Europe on the archaic grounds that it would be detrimental to domestic competition.

What they can't argue, however, is that football, and sport generally, has lost nothing through modernisation. In moments of idleness, when I'm trying to work up some creative thought, I sometimes think about football as it was before agents came along to devalue loyalty.

A question recently put is how many footballers wake up grateful for being paid, in many cases more

than the heads of corporations, to play a game. A pretty safe bet is that not many allow that consideration to intrude upon their musings.

In the light of events at West Ham and Everton, it's probably just beginning to occur to followers of football that the prime consideration of most clubs is now financial stability.

From Redknapp's remarks in newspapers and television he feels that West Ham's decision to accept Leicester's offer for Impey was a blow to his authority over the team. Sympathy can be held out for Redknapp. But the way things are going his experience is something football managers will have to live with. Either that or seek alternative employment.

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Ferguson discovers the power of speech

It's good to talk, Newcastle's £7m signing is ready to admit – and Scotland's coach may be his next call. By John Donoghue



Laughing Magpies: Newcastle's latest recruit, the £7m Scot Duncan Ferguson (left), and manager Ruud Gullit yesterday PA

DUNCAN FERGUSON yesterday reopened the lines of communication with his international coach, Craig Brown, and dropped his first hint that he is prepared to rethink his decision never to play again for Scotland.

With Ruud Gullit, his new club manager at Newcastle, keen to encourage a repatriation, and Ferguson himself at least prepared to listen, there is some prospect that Brown may be able to utilise the outgoing Everton captain en route to the European Championship finals.

Football's great recluse has decided that the time is now right for dialogue – not just with the Scottish Football Association, whose members were struck from his Christmas card list last season, but with the rest of the outside world, too.

Ferguson, the footballer who simply refuses to involve himself as an interviewee, just about talked his head off yesterday when he was presented to the media at St James' Park following his £7m transfer, which will be worth a further £1m to Everton after 30 games.

The 26-year-old striker, who last played for his country two seasons ago against Estonia in Monaco, said: "At the moment what happens at Newcastle is closest to my thoughts, but in the future it could be Scotland. We will just have to wait and see."

It is surprising what a blast of cold north-east air can do for the soul.

There was not even a press conference to mark his £4.4m move from Rangers to Everton in October 1994. Yet the man with the Trappist touch even hinted that this might not prove to be simply a once in a lifetime offer.

"I have always been uncomfortable in front of the cameras," he said. "I decided I just didn't want to speak to people. I carried that over from Scotland. Maybe now it's time I started to speak to some of the press people."

It is a process to which he is surprisingly well suited, as he demonstrated before heading off for Saturday's home game against Wimbledon. Ferguson talked at length about his bond with Everton fans and the hopes he has for the partnership he is about to forge with Alan Shearer.

"I had a great relationship with the Everton fans, a great rapport," Ferguson said. "I showed loyalty to them, they showed loyalty to me – and that will never change."

"That is probably why a part of me will always be at Goodison. You can't just switch off like that. I will miss them. But it was Everton who put me up for sale and didn't want me. Newcastle did want me, and that was good enough for me."

"Once I realised they were interested it became an easy decision, it took me about an hour. But I was surprised Everton were

prepared to sell considering their position in the League. Obviously, that was part of the agenda and, if they think it is going to benefit the club, then that is up to them. I believe other clubs did show interest, but I only spoke to Newcastle."

Gullit, who disclosed that he first tried to sign Ferguson during his days as Chelsea's player-manager, believes he will take the weight off Shearer whose own Tyneside future remains in doubt.

When the subject of the England captain was again raised yesterday, the Newcastle chairman, Freddy Shepherd, prevented any debate. "Can I just stop that," he said. "This is Duncan Ferguson's day, not Alan Shearer's."

So as long as Shearer is around, Ferguson hopes to make the most of it, saying: "Anyone would benefit

playing alongside someone like Alan. But I don't think you could say I can bring the best out of him. He is a quality player, one of the world's best, and has proved he can do the business on his own."

Gullit, whose predecessors Kevin Keegan and Kenny Dalglish virtually had an open cheque book, has had to sell two players in Steve Watson (to Aston Villa) and Stéphane Guivarch (Rangers) to fund this transfer. Though the climate may change, he must have serious doubts about whether he will ever get his hands on a Keegan £80m or Dalglish's £24m.

Ferguson, whose newly signed five-and-a-half year contract is reputedly worth in excess of £10m, may now play for Scotland again – a thought he not so long ago found unpalatable after the way he thought the Scottish FA showed its colours

in the wake of the John McStay affair. Ferguson was not only banned for 12 matches after head-butting the Raith Rovers player, but was also carted off to Glasgow's Barlinnie jail for his sins. What Ferguson wondered was where the Scottish FA was when he needed its support.

Time, including time served, it would seem, is a great healer. While Gullit says he will not force the player into a corner, he does believe a reconciliation should be effected.

Gullit said: "I would like him to play for Scotland again. It is good for any player to turn out for his country. Duncan has had difficulties with Scotland in the past but I believe these difficulties can be overcome. But I am not going to force him to do anything."

For Newcastle's chief executive, Freddie Fletcher, who put together

Elleray denies Gregory's claim

DAVID ELLERAY, the Premier League referees' spokesman, has denied claims from the Aston Villa manager, John Gregory, that his controversial striker Stan Collymore is a marked man with match officials.

Gregory launched his outburst in the aftermath of Saturday's Premiership match against Liverpool when Collymore was sent off for two bookable offences – the first for a horror tackle on Steve Harkness which left him with damaged knee ligaments. But the Villa manager insisted that Collymore "never gets a free-kick or much protection" and that "referees are judging him before he steps on to the pitch."

Gregory, who will be without the £7m striker for the match against Manchester United in 10 days' time, urged officials to "treat him as a footballer, not as Stan Collymore."

Elleray insisted, however, there was no truth in Gregory's claims. "We are all trained to be totally objective," he said. "Given the fact we are under so much scrutiny, if there was evidence of someone being marked out for treatment by a referee, I am sure it would be spotted."

"The difficulty that referees have in dealing with high-profile players is that some people will feel, whatever a referee does, that he is being too strict or letting the player get away with murder. We get criticism both ways."

Gregory, who yesterday placed a £6m price tag on the out-of-favour striker Julian Joachim, is still refusing to say whether he has taken any action against Collymore for the challenge on Harkness.

Meanwhile, Gregory looks set to be without the services of his goalkeeper Mark Bosnich at Nottingham Forest on Saturday. The Australian, who has missed the last six games, is still struggling to overcome the shoulder injury suffered at Coventry in early October.

The Huddersfield captain Barry Horne will be out of action for the next 10 weeks because of medial ligament damage to his knee. The former Wales midfielder had a scan on his right knee yesterday after picking up the injury in Saturday's Yorkshire derby win over Bradford City.

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Scotland pursue full-back gamble

RUGBY UNION

GREGOR TOWNSEND has handed his first international start at full-back for Scotland, World Cup qualifier with Portugal on Saturday.

The Lions stand-off will go on the navy blue No 15 jersey after impressing there at a early replacement for the injured Derrick Lee in last week's 35-10 defeat to South Africa. Originally dropped in the Springboks match to form of Duncan Hodge, the 25-year-old now has an outstanding chance to prove his long-term potential at full-back in the should be a landslide Scottish victory.

Keith Wood, the Lions hooker, earned a full recall to the land side yesterday but is not returning as captain in Saturday's Test against South Africa at Lansdowne Road.

The Irish selectors, who retained the lock Paddy Jones that role, announced a team showing six changes from the side which beat Romania in World Cup qualifier last weekend.

The Lions pair of prop Pat Wallace, who has a sprained ankle, and back row man Eil Miller, who was concussed on Saturday, were ruled out.

They have been replaced by Justin Fitzpatrick and Dan O'Quinn, who was in the Cape Town and two years ago was playing for Western Province.

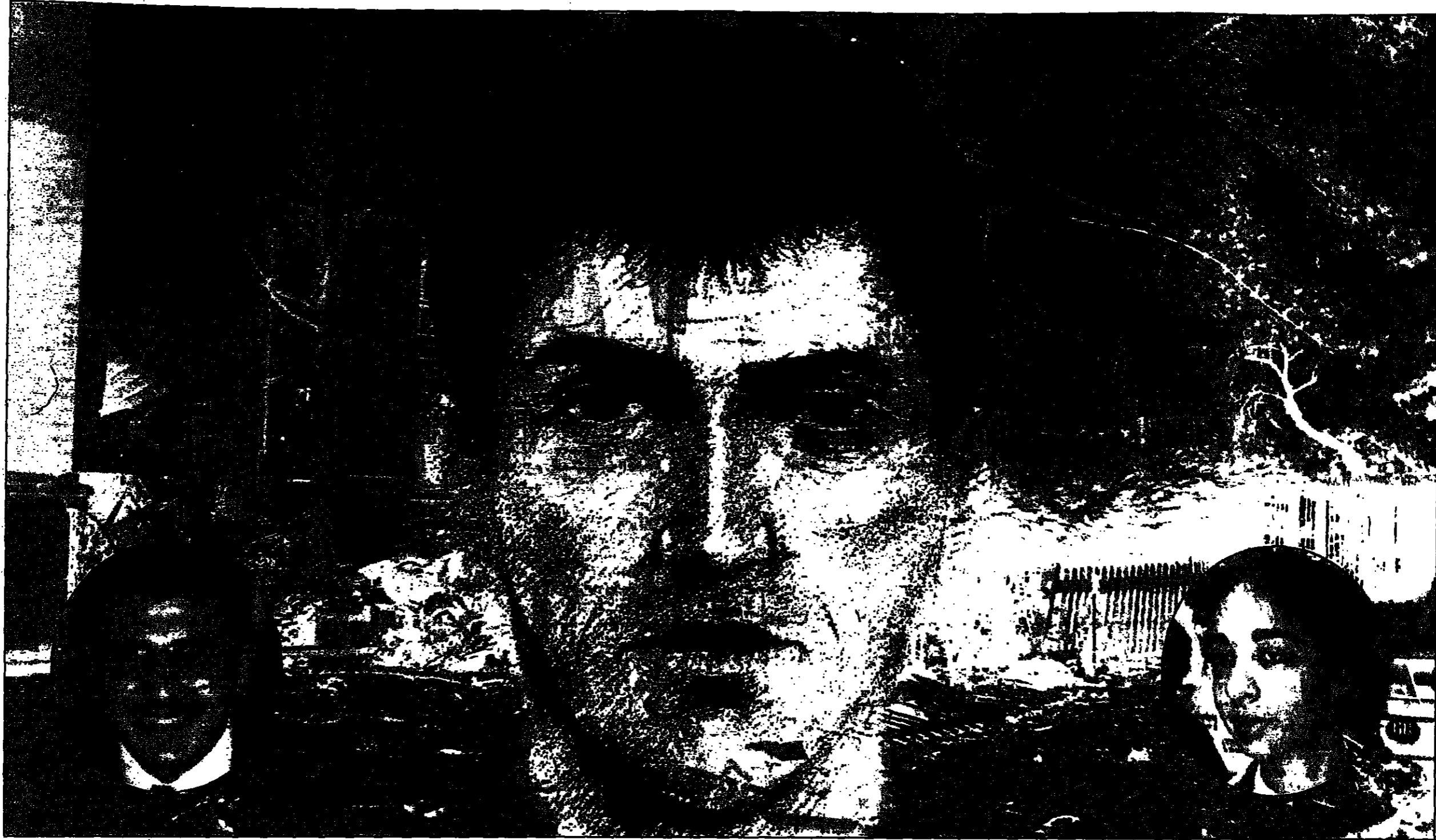
The other changes show the return of Kevin Maguire to scrum-half while the 23-year-old scrum-half Dwyer makes his first start in the jersey on the left wing.

Wood missed Ireland's World Cup win over Georgia 10 days ago because of a contractual dispute with the Irish Rugby Football Union.

That, however, has now been resolved and, after coming on as a half-time replacement against Romania, Wood takes over again in the starting line-up.

"It's great to be back," the scrum-half says. "It's a big match and a big stage and I am delighted to be part of it."

Times, Digest, page 11



Jawad Botmi, above left, and Samar Alami, above right, are in prison for the bombing of the Israeli Embassy in London. But was Reda Moghrabi, centre, the man behind the explosion?

The bomber who never was

This is the face of Reda Moghrabi. Because of him fellow Palestinians Samar Alami and Jawad Botmi are serving 20 years for conspiracy to bomb the Israeli Embassy. Only Moghrabi – now suspected of being an Israeli agent – knows the truth, but apart from their word there is not the slightest evidence that he ever existed. By Robert Fisk

'yuck'

*** * ***

Give them what they really want this Christmas

Inside her tiny room, with its arched brick roof just off the stone corridor of the women's Category 'A' prison in Durham, Samar Alami has already had two years to ponder the extraordinary events that took her from her wealthy Knightsbridge home to share her life with Myra Hindley and Rosemary West. Palestine seems a very long way away – even when Samar Alami hands her visitors a small cup of scalding, Arabic coffee – and the more she tells her story, the more you realise how difficult it must have been for an English jury to believe in her innocence.

On 16 December 1996, Samar Alami and her friend, Jawad Botmi, both proclaiming their innocence, were convicted of conspiring to bomb the Israeli embassy and the headquarters of the Zionist Federation in London in 1994. "The evil pair," one paper called them. When Alami named the man she believed had entrapped them – Reda Moghrabi, whom she now suspected was an Israeli agent – the authorities largely ignored her revelation. Which is perverse, to say the least, because the police admit they never found the actual bomber. And Moghrabi is the name the bomber used.

At 32, Samar Alami is a slight, energetic Lebanese-Palestinian with a BSc in chemical engineering from University College, London, and an MSc from Imperial College; an intelligent, thoughtful, political woman who was a member of various British Palestinian groups, as well as a supporter – she never concealed this – of the Damascus-based Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Jawad Botmi is 30, came from Beirut in the occupied West Bank, and holds a BSc in electrical engineering from Leicester University. An attempt to run his own security alarm company had failed by January 1995, and he was reduced to earning pin-money in Britain by acting as a middle-man at car auctions. Frustration at the plight of Palestinian refugees, anger at the unfair nature of the Oslo "peace

accord, and guilt that they had no part in the "resistance" to Israeli rule in the West Bank, brought the two together.

Carefully, Alami tells visitors of her life before the trial: how she had kept two guns in a family apartment in Knightsbridge for a Palestinian friend who feared assassination when he was in London; how she tried to work out the chemistry of bombs which could be improvised for use against Israeli military targets in the occupied territories; how she experimented with Botmi to see if model aircraft could carry explosives over the Lebanese-Israeli border; how she had been photographed at a London synagogue during a visit by Shimon Peres (she said she took an interest in Jewish affairs); and of how she took up Reda Moghrabi's offer of free explosives (for experiments with the model aircraft, she claims) a few days before the Israeli embassy was bombed in 1994.

"I guess I was a bit naïve," she told me just before her trial. "I never felt threatened by Reda Moghrabi. I didn't take nearly enough precautions." And listening to her, I could see how the 12-strong jury would shake their heads in disbelief. She was convicted by a majority of 11 to one, and I wasn't surprised. Gareth Peirce, her solicitor, was not going to score any points when the defence tried to explain to the jury the history of Palestine – even though Peirce brought along a shoal of testimonials for Samar Alami, including one from a former Tory minister, Lord Gilmour.

But the trial was, to put it mildly, a very puzzling affair. Even before it began, the case developed unusually. First of all, the police charged Nadia Zekra, a very middle-class Palestinian lady, with planting the bomb outside the embassy. Explosive traces had supposedly been found on a table in her home. Then, once the trial began, all charges against Zekra were dropped. Another Palestinian, Mahmoud Abu-Wardeh, was charged, but the jury acquitted him on all charges. And in the pre-trial period, the judge allowed both Alami and Botmi to go free on bail – indeed, I first

met both of them when they turned up to a lecture I gave at the Royal Geographical Society in London during their hearing. Why, I asked myself then, would the court allow two supposedly dangerous "terrorists", alleged to have blown up an embassy, to wander the streets of London?

The claim of responsibility for the Israeli embassy bombing was itself very curious. It was sent to two Arab newspapers in London and claimed to be from the "Jaffa team" of the "Palestinian Resistance". No such group has ever been heard of before, or since, and the wording of the Arabic-language document lacked the clarity of nearly all other similar claims. A week earlier, a massive bomb had destroyed the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires – yet the London bombings killed no one, an extraordinary miracle that had most Middle East militants wondering what sort of organisation could have proved so ineffective. Every Palestinian opposition group or Muslim organisation in Lebanon opposed to the so-called "peace process" has either denied to *The Independent* any role in the explosions, or expressed ignorance of it.

Then came the trial itself. Gareth Peirce, Alami's solicitor – the lady who broke the prosecution's case in the Guildford Four trial – agrees that the judge, Mr Justice Garland, generally behaved with great fairness towards her client. But there were some unhappy prosecution slips in the trial. A drawing of London streets allegedly showing the location of the Israeli embassy – target of the July 1994 bombers – was proved to be a street map of Sidon where one of Alami's relatives lived. There was confusion about an aerial found in Mr Abu-Wardeh's possession which was originally said to be part of Botmi's aircraft project, but was in fact part of a security alarm.

Then two members of the jury complained to Mr Justice Garland that a reporter in the court had tried to contact them during the trial proceedings. One of the jurors stated that the reporter "said words to the effect: 'I've got a telephone

Continued on page 8

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DILEMMAS
WITH VIRGINIA IRONSIDE

Should I tell my parents they ruined my childhood?

Nicolette's counsellor has suggested that she write her parents a letter outlining how she felt they let her down in childhood. She can't bear to do it because she knows it would upset her mother and that her father would never speak to her again. But her counsellor says her own mental health is more important than any pain she might cause. An unprecedented number of readers wrote to tell her what she should do

WHAT VIRGINIA SAYS

My own late father always advised me that writing angry letters was a good thing. "Write it, sleep on it, rewrite it, wait a week, make another draft to make it even more vicious, sleep on it again, then cut it down to half, and make a fair copy," he would say. "But never, never, under any circumstances, send it."

It seems extraordinary that a counsellor is pushing Nicolette to do something that she instinctively knows is wrong. It's easy to write the letter, easy to post it, but how will she deal with the feedback? This is a letter, after all, one that can be read and reread, hurting again and again.

Far from clearing the air, it will fill it with fire and smoke and tears. It may well be that her parents will cut themselves off from her, they will feel so hurt and angry. Could Nicolette cope with that, along

with all her other problems?

How are Nicolette's parents going to feel when they open up this bombshell from a daughter whom they may well have loved deeply in their own way? Does she have any ideas of the stresses and strains they were under as they brought her up? Has she any concept of the thinking about child upbringing that existed when she was young?

Perhaps she was left to scream and scream because her parents thought, according to books they read at the time, that it was the right thing to do. Perhaps they had had appalling difficulties in their own childhoods which made them unable to be the ideal parents that she fantasises about.

I know I resent my mother for always making me wear horribly fashionable clothes when I was small, which made me look ridiculous. But she did it because as a child she was always forced to wear grey school uniforms and

hand-me-downs, and would have given anything to have looked pretty and up-to-date. She thought I would like it. Nearly everyone could dredge up bitter criticisms of their parents.

Obviously, if Nicolette's parents consistently abused her physically and psychologically, and she basically hates them and never wants to see them again, a letter would be fine. It would be a form of justice. But it certainly doesn't sound as though things were like that in Nicolette's home.

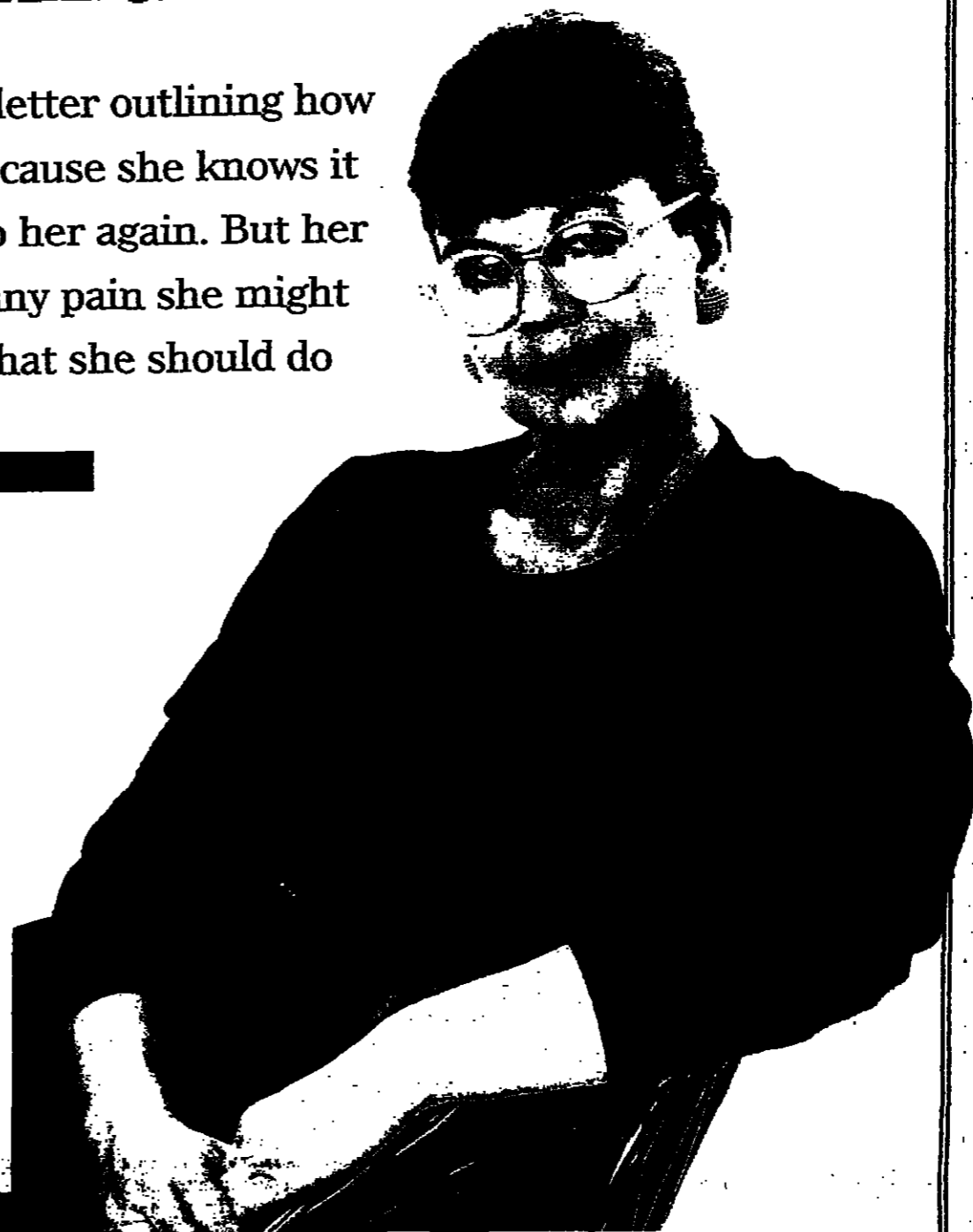
Now, to confront her parents face to face, in a spirit of inquiry rather than resentment, could have completely different results. "I have never really understood why you sent me to boarding school when you knew I was so unhappy there." "I often thought, when I was small, that you never talked to me or listened to me because you thought I was stupid. Was I right?" These are remarks

that would imply no direct criticism, just an interest in what her parents' motives were. Her parents might be hurt, but certainly not devastated.

This could be healing, but only if Nicolette feels comfortable with it. But on the whole, counselling should involve helping a client to get in touch with her feelings of anger and resentment about her parents and to acknowledge and "own" them.

Only then can she forgive her parents - and perhaps get in touch with the kind things they did as well. And then she can get on with living her own life.

I wonder what the counsellor would suggest if Nicolette's parents were dead. Would she say that that was a pity because now she'd be stuck with her problems forever and she'd never be able to resolve them? Of course not. Nicolette would have to resolve them internally. Which is what she must do now.



WHAT READERS SAY

Seize the moment
In my case it was my father to whom I wrote as my mother was dead. It was not easy, but it was a wonderful release. It forced him to acknowledge me. It began the process of sorting out our relationship. It took ages to get him to even agree that I had a point, but in the end he did. My only regret is that he died before we could complete the journey together, but we were much closer than we would otherwise have been.

Did it upset him? Of course it did. But that was his problem. I realised that my debt to myself was more important than my concern for his feelings. That lifetime subordination of feeling was at the heart of the problem - it had suppressed and belittled me.

Once I finally rebelled against it, I began to feel better. Counselling was no longer necessary. I was free at last.

Nicolette, this is the moment. Be strong. Seize it. Make it happen. Engage. Write that first letter. You will never regret it.

PETER MORGAN
Durham

Spare yourself the guilt
Don't post that letter. I did and it caused a lot of pain on both sides. My parents were baffled by my views - they felt that they had done the best for me in difficult circumstances.

Telling your parents how you feel won't benefit your mental health. It will just make you feel guilty and possibly worse than before.

Go ahead and write down your feelings - then burn the letters.

GINA GORDON
Leeds

No one has ideal parents. My advice to Nicolette is to immediately stop seeing her counsellor. With the money she saves she could have a great night out with her best mate at her local pub, and tell her friend what rotten parents she had. I guarantee that her friend will then tell her that her own mother and father were far from ideal. The two of them could then discuss how they themselves would be perfect parents with angelic children.

I failed my own children at times, but we love each other.

RUTH ANGUS
Bath

They're odd, not you
In order to move forward you have to let go of the past. By encouraging you to challenge your parents' past behaviour in the form of a letter, your counsellor is trying to help you see this. If you don't tell your parents what they have done, they will carry on behaving in the same way, and you will continue with this burden and not get on with your life. Your parents may not change but you can.

I am nearly 29 and both my parents suffer from psychiatric disorders and have done some terrible things. Thanks to a counsellor I have learned to have the courage to stand strong against them.

Go on - post the letter.

Take one step at a time
and you'll find the strength comes to you naturally. They are the ones who are odd - not you. When you realise this you'll wonder why you wasted so much time. I do.

JO HAMMOND
Leicester

I would be shattered I left my sons, aged five and three, with their father when we divorced in 1965 and, although they came back to live with me as teenagers, I suffered from enormous guilt, and still do, at this desertion of them. They are now in their thirties, both very successful, and they assure me that what happened to them as children was part of life and any unhappiness

they may have experienced as adults is not my fault; they are responsible for their own lives now.

If they were to write me a letter such as Nicolette's counsellor advises, I would be totally shattered - we can only do the best we can as parents, and often that best is not good enough. For Nicolette's parents to be told, out of the blue, that they handled her badly would be terribly cruel. She should tear up the letter - surely writing it has been cathartic enough!

KATHARINE ODGERS
Hove, E Sussex

I needed to shock them. Nicolette's letter reminded me of a letter I wrote to my mum in 1983: I spewed out,

in graphic detail, events I had suffered in silence for the previous 21 years. I meant to shock and I meant to hurt and because no one in my family had any support to deal with what I revealed I caused a major rift between myself, my immediate family circle and the wider network of our relatives, which has remained to this day.

From the moment my letter was sent I effectively - and painfully - forced myself to move on. To my family what I had said was so unimaginable that their only option was to totally deny what I'd written and immediately close ranks.

It has taken me 12 years to reclaim the self-respect and love I knew I deserved

in my life, and I can state that I now feel no guilt or shame about the effect my letter had on my family. I knew deep down that I had no alternative.

ANONYMOUS

Accusations are useless
How can the counsellor know that her parents can look after themselves - such an accusation could have a devastating effect on them.

My sister tried exactly the same solution to a problem she felt she had with our parents. Her perception of our upbringing was entirely at odds with mine, but she was convinced they had caused her untold grief. The letter had a devastating effect on our parents and they never fully recovered from the accusations levelled at them, and also, it did her no good at all.

ANONYMOUS

Ditch the counsellor. Imagine, if you will, the postman arrives tomorrow morning with a letter in your mother's hand. It's not your birthday and it's too early for Christmas. You open the envelope to find - lo and behold - a detailed, planned, precise account of

every way you have let your parents down - from toddler tantrums, through adolescent sullenness and teenage arrogance, to twentysomething distance. How would you feel? After all, as you pointed out, you are 27 and, like them, can look after yourself - can't you?

Ditch the counsellor and try talking to your parents. You might actually resolve the problems your therapist has been charging you £30 a week to discuss.

J WOODBRIDGE
Surrey

Talk to your parents
Perhaps it would be more helpful to exorcise the pain by putting a chair in front of you and pretending that you are talking to your mum and your dad. You could explain how you feel without having to worry about their feelings. I, too, once wrote a letter to my parents but decided not to send it. I simply asked each one individually if they loved me. For me that was all that was needed and it enabled me to see them as they were then - young, insecure and human.

LYNDA FAULKNER
Chessington, Surrey

NEXT WEEK'S DILEMMA

Dear Virginia,
Some friends and I are organising a skiing party in January. We have a mutual friend who is getting increasingly irritating. She is deeply unhappy, an unemployed single parent, who demands to be the centre of attention and has a vicious temper. She also expects everything to be done for her. We care enough about her to put up with her even when

she brings her nine-year-old son along, who is a nightmare. On occasion, she is capable of extraordinary kindness. But several people have said they'd have to think twice about coming if she and her son are asked.

We can't not ask her. It would be too unkind. She considers herself to be a pivotal part of our circle. What can we do? Do we have to sacrifice the holiday? Or

should we just put up with her?

Yours sincerely, Sonia
Anyone who has advice quoted will be sent a bouquet from InterBox. Please send letters and dilemmas to Virginia Ironside, 'The Independent', 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, fax 0171-293 2182, or e-mail: dilemmas@independent.co.uk - giving a postal address for sending the bouquet.

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POETIC LICENCE

THE NATIONAL HAPPINESS INDEX BY MARTIN NEWELL
ILLUSTRATION BY ANDREW BIRCH

The Government has proposed a "quality of life" barometer to measure the happiness of the nation with key headline indicators such as housing, transport, health and land use

Can we measure happiness?
Labour answers firmly: "Yes."
But in case of lingering doubt.
Try these indicators out:

Rainy day, with cup of tea
Lying in bed with small TV
British film, made '43
"Happy dahlings?" Terribly.

Moving out of well-loved house
Due to job-loss/errant spouse
Going back to clean the thing
Crying in car of rebound fling.

Waking without aching head
After vat of Spanish red
Having got away with it
Due to some divine remit.

Stuck on train one weekday night
Driver waiting for green light
Tammy burbling in old noise
While you miss the latest Morse.

Local, full of Bridget Joneses
Shouting in their mobile phones
Smoking, drinking G & T
Far too noisy. (not v.g.)

Friday night at five-to-eight
Wedge in pocket, red-hot date
Just about to go for beer
Cat crawls in with torn-off ear.

Saturday in Casualty
After gardening tragedy
Sat behind two football yobs
Listening to distant sobs.

Taking all these factors in
Giving it the usual spin
Are we happy? Do we know?
Yeah. Delirious. Can I go?



Opinion 150

Katie just wanted to help others

Katie Sullivan, a 23-year-old carer for the mentally ill, was stabbed to death by a patient six years ago. Now it has happened again. Why? By Grant Rollings

The death of Jenny Morrison, the 50-year-old social worker who was killed at a care-in-the-community hostel in Balham, south London this week, brought back bitter memories for Sandra Sullivan. Although the precise circumstances of Jenny Morrison's death have yet to emerge, the killing at a hostel reminded her of the death of her own daughter six years ago.

Like Jenny, Katie Sullivan was devoted to her job, caring for the mentally ill. Ideally, perhaps, she told her mother a day before her death: "One day I will teach those around me, doctors included, to respect those who are mentally ill."

Katie was 23 when she began working as a carer in Kingston for a MIND hostel for 23 an hour. She had read psychology at Swansea University and planned to study for a doctorate at Oxford University.

On the day she died, Katie was washing up in the kitchen of the hostel when a female patient, Eriyenne Inweh, walked up behind her. She picked up a carving knife and thrust it into Katie 14 times, piercing her heart, liver and lungs. Katie's screams were heard by a fellow patient who alerted the hostel manager. The manager discovered Inweh kneeling over Katie still stabbing her. Inweh, 22, had used violence before but Katie was unaware of the extent of the patient's violent nature.

In fact, Katie had struck up a friendship with Inweh, even introducing the patient to her family. However, Inweh had become upset when Katie told her that she'd applied for a £200-a-week job as a care assistant. The day before her attack, she'd stopped taking her medication and only eight days earlier, that medication had been halved.

When Katie died, Sandra Sullivan, now 53, and her husband Mick expected sympathy and help from her employers and from the legal authorities. They felt, though, that there was no help. Lawyers representing the council which was responsible for the hostel where Katie was killed, even said the Sullivans would "save money" in the future by not having to pay for Katie's Christmas and birthday presents.

Sandra says: "Katie was

frequently referred to as a 'calculated risk' and an 'unfortunate incident'. Treating in dog dirt is an unfortunate incident."

Sandra, who has four children, says: "Our family was obviously devastated, but we only had each other to turn to. There was no help from outside. Most of all we wanted answers, but everything was very secretive. At first we thought it was a million-to-one chance that Katie had been killed. But as we looked harder, we found it could have been avoided."

Over the past six years, Mick and Sandra have battled for justice for their daughter. It has been extremely difficult for them to see a string of similar cases crop up in the news among people working in the mental health sector. A year after Katie died, Jonathan Newby, a 23-year-old postgraduate student, was working in a homeless hostel in Oxford. He was stabbed by Andrew Rouse, a schizophrenic who

attack a fellow patient who she believed was the Anti-Christ.

Despite spending £50,000 in legal costs trying to force enquiries and to get answers the couple were constantly thwarted by red-tape. Sandra is a calm, well-educated woman, but there is no hiding the abiding feeling of anger and revulsion. She only refers to Inweh as "it".

Sandra says: "When it took my daughter's life it gave up the right to be recognised as a human being because that is not human behaviour. To me that person will always be an 'it'."

Eventually Inweh was cleared of Katie's murder and sent to Broadmoor indefinitely. Sandra is still shocked by the detail that emerged after the court case.

"Potentially violent patients were not normally admitted to the MIND hostel in Kingston because it was supposed to ease them back into the community," she says.

The social worker who admitted Inweh to the hostel did not know all the details of the previous hospital attack and told the MIND hostel that she had not been involved in "life-threatening behaviour".

Now another hostel worker has been fatally stabbed. "But I know our campaigning has done some good. We have made people sit up and listen. Now we need real change. Not only has Care in the Community cost the life of my daughter Katie. I believe it cost the life of my husband as well," Sandra says.

A couple of months ago Mick Sullivan, 56, died from a heart attack, sitting next to Sandra in the car. He had just learned that the Sullivans would not be able to have legal representation at a mental health tribunal which was due to discuss the possible release of Katie's killer.

Now Sandra is carrying on the work alone; among other things, she would like research to be carried out about the long-term effects of sudden or violent deaths on families. She would also like to make the voice of victims of crime more audible and has helped to launch an umbrella group for victims organisations called Victims' Voice. Organisations backing the charity include The Suzy Lumpkin Trust and The Zito Trust.

"I only hope that this latest killing can finally make something happen," Sandra says.

'One day I will teach those around me, including doctors, to respect those who are mentally ill'

was later sent to Broadmoor. In the same year, Georgina Robinson, an occupational therapist at Torbay Hospital, was killed by Andrew Robinson, who had planned to kill John Major.

Michael Howlett, director of the Zito Trust says: "People who have commitment to doing good can be taken advantage of. All too often there is no training offered. They're left to supervise shifts, often on their own and deal with people who really are too dangerous to be in the community."

Sandra is still determined to improve standards for these employees and volunteers. For example, she wants other mental health workers, like their daughter, to be told about the background, violent or otherwise, of patients they're working with.

While Inweh was detained in hospital under the Mental Health Act, it was discovered that she had already used a sharp weapon to



The 'halfway house', in Balham, south London, where Jenny Morrison was stabbed to death



Jenny Morrison, the 50-year-old social worker killed this week



Katie Sullivan, the 23-year-old stabbed to death in 1992

Dining in a good cause

Restaurants are raising money for charity. All we have to do is eat, drink and be generous. By Steve Crawshaw

MARTIN BELL, tucks into goat's cheese beignets with tapenade and vegetable niccise he had hesitated briefly over the smoked salmon with cockle butter, but his wife Fiona eventually plumped for that one). Then comes the main dish, including a choice between Dover sole with cucumber, brown shrimp and dill, and roast scallops with bouillabaisse and green olives. Another glass of chardonnay? That would be nice. Dessert wine, to round off the evening? Nice still. At Richard Corrigan's quietly fashionable Lindsay House restaurant in Soho, central London (where the Prime Minister was a recent guest), we are enjoying a gastronomic treat with the former BBC correspondent and current independent MP for Tatton. And it is all in a good cause.

For this is where the borderlines between pleasure and charity are irrevocably blurred. This week's dinner was the first of a series of money-making eat-ins organised by

the charity War Child. "Feast for Peace" events, officially launched tomorrow, will take place at more than 100 restaurants across the country in the next few days.

The idea is to bleed customers of their money while they have a good meal. Participating restaurants, in turn, agree to give 25 per cent of their takings to charity. The more you eat, the more they'll give. What better bottle of wine? It's all for charity.

John Carmichael of War Child explains the simple idea: "To do good while having a good time." Those who have signed up for the honorary committee of the Feast for Peace include chefs Jean-Christophe Novelli, Aldo Zilli and the Nosh Brothers.

War Child came into existence in Bosnia in 1993, where film-makers Bill Lesson and David Wilson wanted to do something - anything - to help the children they had seen. The two men and a

phone project quickly snowballed, however, and the charity now has offices in six countries. It has successfully persuaded big names from showbiz and the arts to get involved - from David Bowie to Tom Stoppard to the Spice Girls. Its best known project is the new Pavlovli music centre in the city of Mostar, launched with an opening concert by Big Luciano himself. But the charity has now broadened well beyond its original base, with projects in Guatemala, Chechnya, and across Africa.

Carmichael sums up the organisation's aims: "To give hope to the lives of children who have been through war." But is there not something odd about this sense of gorging oneself to raise money for those who have nothing? Bell admits that he might draw the line at "feasting for famine - that would be too much". In this case, however, he argues that the end justifies the pleasurable means. His own experience as a war correspondent influ-

enced his support for War Child. "What struck me is the extent to which, in modern warfare, kids are targeted. Children are very much in the line of fire."

To which end, your conscience can allow you a gastronomic splurge. Each restaurant has come up with its own "theme night". Malson Novelli in London's Clerkenwell is offering a free children's menu for children who agree to become pen-pals with children from War Child projects across the world; at Zilli Fish, Stephen Fry and Natalie from All Saints will be among the celebrities who will serve customers during the day; and so on. Aldo Zilli himself says: "I've never been enthusiastic about giving money away. This is the first time. It came from the reactions of people I spoke to. If we can help by enjoying ourselves, why not?"

For a full list of participating restaurants, ring the Feast for Peace hotline on 0217-916 6000

'The evil pair' - but are they the bombers that never were?

Continued from page 1
number if you want it." The reporter - subsequently identified by The Independent as a journalist for Israeli radio, and who denied any attempt to "bottle" the jury - was interviewed by the police but allowed to remain in court during the trial.

Garth Peirce tried to obtain the film from the Israeli embassy security videotape camera that must have shown the bomber - only to be told that the security camera was not working on the day of the bombing. Both the accused could prove that they were not at the scene of the bombing - Alami had been making a telephone call from the Imperial College library at the time, had forgotten where she was when the bomb exploded (as she might well have done if innocent), and was only able to prove her alibi when her solicitor found that the telephone in the library recorded the time and number of calls.

But once Alami and Botmi decided to name Moghrabi - having apparently begun to realise the degree to which they had been "set up" - the authorities took little interest in his words. It is also possible to reconstruct his story. Agents, after all, are always encouraged to build their identities around events that really happened, because it is easier to stick to a biography if some of it is actually true.

Born in the West Bank around 1950, and to parents who had abandoned their home on the coast during the 1948 flight of Palestinians from what became Israel, Moghrabi grew up in Nablus or Ramallah. Arrested by the Israelis for "resistance activities" in 1978 or 1979, he moved to Jordan where he taught at the Barqaa refugee camp.

In early June 1982, Moghrabi fought Israeli invasion forces on the Lebanese coast road south of Sidon. Falling out with both Yasser Arafat's PLO and Arafat's opponents in Damascus, he left Lebanon via Syria and Cyprus for Britain where - through refugee status or marriage to an Englishwoman - he went into business with Gulf contacts. In the mid-Eighties, he moved to Kuwait but then fled when Iraq invaded in 1990, returning to Britain to live in Birmingham.

Alami met Moghrabi for the first time in the spring of 1992, after they both attended a London lecture on the Middle East. Moghrabi began discussing "resistance problems" with Alami and Botmi in 1993, recalling his experience in Lebanon. "Moghrabi was coming across as someone informative, critical, interesting and experienced," Alami was to recall. By March of 1994, they were talking about the techniques of bomb-making. Moghrabi seemed "knowledgeable". In June 1994,

Moghrabi used Botmi's help in buying a second-hand Audi car - which was to seal Botmi's fate. A few days later, Alami and Moghrabi met for the last time.

"He had phoned me... saying he was leaving Britain and he might leave a few things for me," Alami recalled. "He said that he had been doing experiments, that he had produced [sic] he no longer needed... and thought of giving them to me." Moghrabi gave Alami explosives, boot-to-boot from his car to hers in central London. "I wasn't sure how to react but somehow couldn't say no," she says. Just after midday on 26 July 1994, the Audi car blew up outside the Israeli embassy in London. That night, another bomb exploded outside Balfour house in Finchley. Alami and Botmi were convicted of conspiracy - though not the actual bombing - in December.

The jury obviously concluded that Reda Moghrabi was a fictional character. But if so, Alami and Botmi have produced a mighty convincing portrait of the "Man Who Never Was". And since even Scotland Yard agree that the convicted pair did not carry out the bombing - that there was someone else who actually planted the bomb - you might expect the police to show a little more interest in the man with the staring eyes.

Grace, power, charisma: Bruce Lee had it all. And 25 years after his death, the actor and martial arts expert's influence doesn't stop at film. No. It's that whole guy thing... By Linton Chiswick

Dragon heart

Bruce Lee died a quarter of a century ago, aged 32. He had brought Hong Kong cinema to an international audience, charmed Hollywood, and developed a form of kung fu as rich in philosophy as it was acrobatic in kicking style. When the newly fashionable kung fu and karate swept America and Europe, influencing everything from James Bond to the selling of cheap aftershave, Lee taught big screen hard men Steve McQueen, Lee Marvin and James Coburn how to kick above their own height. He was typecast as what commentator Bey Logan (interviewed below) calls "the great Asian master coming to shed his wisdom on the West".

These days, his influence is much more surprising. As London's National Film Theatre prepares for a commemorative season of Lee's work, "Bruce Lee: The Man, The Myth, The Legend", it is his wide-ranging and discriminating followers who perhaps represent the untold story. Here, three of them tell of his considerable and far-reaching impact.

The Fighter
Guru Lee Banda, World Welterweight Stick Fighting Champion from 1996 to 1998, teaches Jeet Kune Do (Lee's own martial art) at the International Combat Centre in Tonbridge. Banda was taught by five of Bruce Lee's closest students, including the great Dan Inosanto. He doesn't like many martial arts films, but owns all of Lee's.

"I would love it if you would write a piece that would make people realise what a good martial artist and teacher he was. Lots of his fans think he was just a film actor and that it was all trick photography. But although there is a difference between the theatrical kung fu on the screen and that of a combat situation, you still get the sense he could have got away with it all."

But what about his acting? There have been other great fighters, but none have captured the imagination like Lee. "Here was a guy who had one leg shorter than the other, one testi-

cle, was 5 ft 7", 140 pounds, and yet so graceful and powerful that I don't think his speed will ever be matched. He just crackled with charisma."

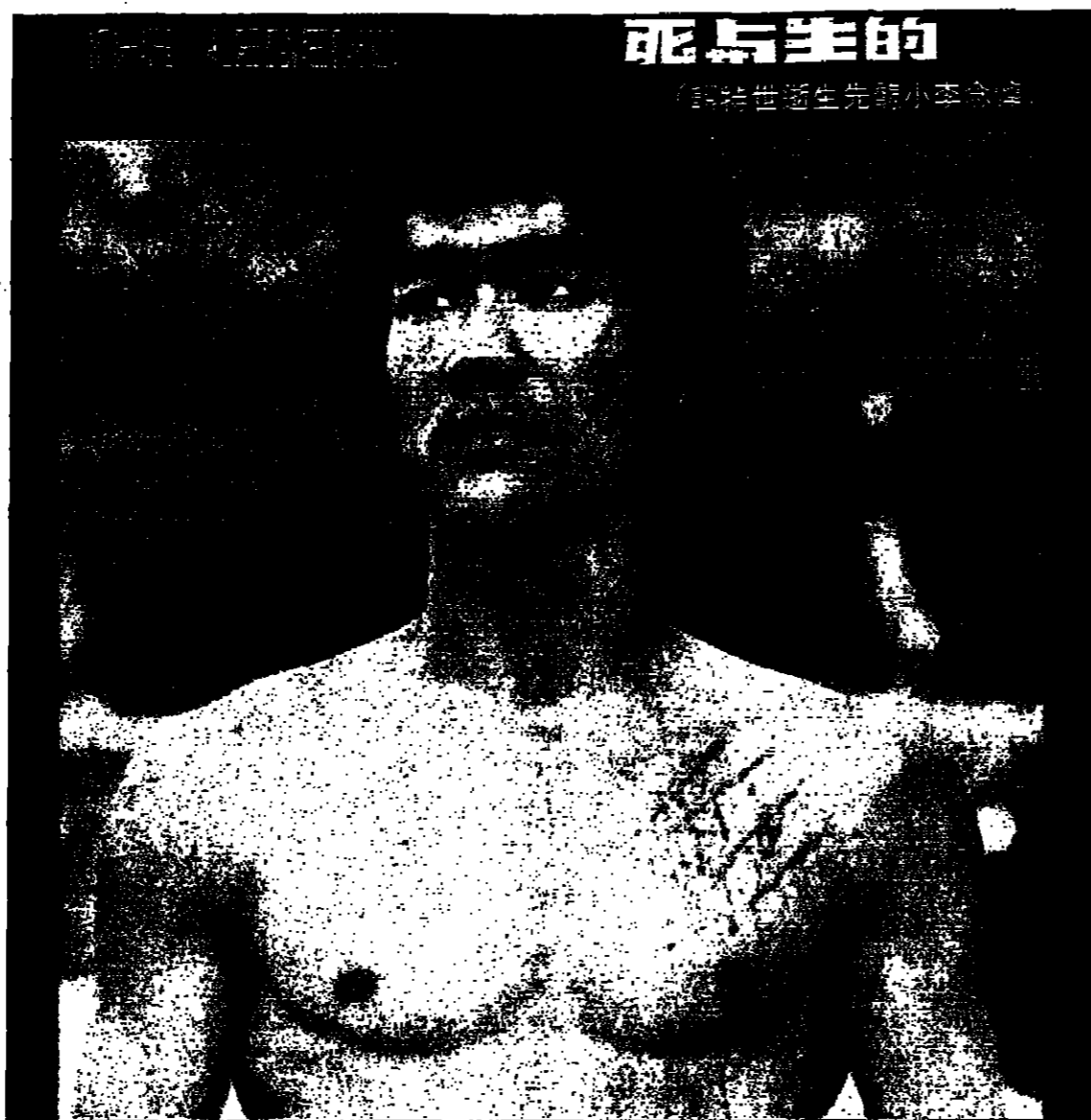
The Dancer

Award-winning New York dancer and choreographer, Doug Elkins, exercises his right to eclecticism, incorporating street-style breakdance and streetwise parody into an electrifying set, seen recently at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall. He's also a fan of martial arts, and practises Brazilian capoeira, Japanese aikido, Chinese "monkey-style", and Shaolin kung fu. He acknowledges the influence of Hong Kong cinema, and particularly the films of Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan and John Woo, on his own work.

"If you look at any kata [the set-piece of movements in martial arts], it's a ritualised choreography," says Elkins. "There's a story being played out. From the kata to the Bruce Lee films, there's movement information in there. Why make distinctions between dance and other movement? It's like the Jeet Kune Do saying: 'Use what is useful.'"

Bruce Lee was one-time cha-cha champion of Hong Kong. His films include elaborately choreographed set pieces, shot from a distance, in which whole groups of fighters move as one single organism. When the camera closes in on Lee, the battle is played out in strange, cartoon-like facial gestures. For Elkins, these techniques are part of the fun. "All these gestures, over-emphases... we in the West may see it as melodrama or over-acting, but it's fascinating. The violence is always done in revenge for something, like 'You've disgraced my sister', or whatever it is in *Enter the Dragon*, when rather than being taken, she takes her own life. Then when he comes and beats the man, there's an almost orgasmic expression of pleasure on his face. It's kind of like the predecessor of *A Clockwork Orange*, except it's morally justified."

So how does an appreciation of Bruce Lee manifest itself in a chore-



Bruce Lee: no other fighters have captured the imagination like him

ographer's work? "Martial arts offer me something very distinct, very intimate. Whenever you attack someone, whether it's physically or emotionally, you actually make yourself vulnerable by expressing who you are. And with martial arts, when someone's swinging at you, you don't have to pretend. It's like someone slapping their child down in a tube station. You're drawn to it, the actuality of it. It's very dynamic."

The Fan

Bey Logan is the author of *Hong Kong Action Cinema* (Titan) and currently works for Media Asia, the company that owns the rights to the Bruce Lee filmography. Like many of the new generation of Bruce Lee fans, he began watching the films after Lee's death. However, since moving to Hong Kong, he has worked with peo-

ple who knew Lee during his Hong Kong heyday. What does Logan think it was about the man that still attracts such international fascination?

"His movies celebrate the male aesthetic in a way that men from any background feel comfortable acknowledging. From your choreographer in New York to your truck driver from Bradford, any man can look at a Bruce Lee movie and say: 'Boy, that guy can move!' And then, of course, you have someone who was a philosopher and a marvellous speaker. Only in Bruce Lee did you get this nexus, all these things in one person."

What does Logan make of Lee's odd acting style? Within Lee's extraordinary flirtation with the camera, he occasionally appears to enjoy his own private, post-Modern joke with the audience. "I don't believe Lee was sending up the Hong Kong style.

Bruce's father was a very famous opera performer, and so he'd soak up all those basics as a youngster and then refer to them."

For Logan and countless others, Lee's importance transcends martial arts. "People are always asking how come we haven't had the new Bruce Lee. I say we have, but we haven't recognised him or her. The new Bruce Lee is the choreographer who, in his own art form, has been inspired to transcend the old rules, has had success and said, 'This is my Jeet Kune Do'. If Bruce's legacy has any relevance to the modern world, it must be that. The new Bruce Lee might be a middle-aged woman in Twickenham who started writing poetry after watching *Enter the Dragon*."

Tracking the Dragon is at the NFT, London, Sun to 9 Dec

ALSO SHOWING

THE SLUMS OF BEVERLY HILLS
TAMARA JENKINS (15) ■ THE WISDOM OF
CROCODILES PO-CHIH LEONG (18)
IF ONLY MARIA RIPOLL (15) ■ THE
PHILADELPHIA STORY GEORGE CUKOR (U)

IF YOU'VE ever wondered what a "dingbat" is then look no further than *Slums of Beverly Hills*, a modest and very likeable rite-of-passage movie written and directed by first-timer Tamara Jenkins. As 15-year-old Vivian (Natasha Lyonne) explains, dingbats are crummy two-storey apartments, the sort of place where her father (Alan Arkin) tends to install Vivian and her two brothers amid the grubbier districts of Beverly Hills.

The arrival of favourite cousin Rita (Maria Tomeh), a recovering addict, brings the girl some much-needed female company and a useful primer in the joys of the vibrator. While the genre material (loss of virginity, sibling conflict, climactic family bust-up) and the period (the Seventies, of course) have been heavily overworked, Jenkins personalises the story through her forgiving tone, helped no end by Arkin's gruffly affectionate father. Tomeh's wayward Rita and Natasha Lyonne's precociously composed heroine.

The Wisdom of Crocodiles opens with the image of a mangled car perched in a tree, and proceeds to scale ever higher towards the inexplicable and absurd. Jude Law plays Steven Griscz, a vampire with a difference: he needs not just the blood of the young women he preys on but their love too. Talk about fussy! His latest target is an alluring beauty named Anna (Elina Löwensohn), who's impressed by the way Steven can sketch upside down and quote from the *Song of Solomon*, little suspecting he's north London's answer to Bela Lugosi.

In the meantime, two police detectives (Timothy Spall and Jack Davenport) are pursuing inquiries into the disappearance of Steven's last girlfriend. Just when you think their investigation is warming up, the film decides to drop them from view altogether. This plot-hole might have been noteworthy if the director's grip on realism were not so

tenuous elsewhere. *The Wisdom of Crocodiles* might have got away with being laughable; the fact that it's funded by an Arts Council grant makes it deplorable too.

For her debut feature *If Only* Maria Ripoll deploys the same parallel universe gimmick as *Sliding Doors*. Struggling actor Victor (Douglas Henshall) is mauling over ex-girlfriend Sylvia (Lena Headey), who's about to get married. By the magical intervention of two Hispanic dustmen, Victor is allowed to wipe the slate clean and start over, but his second chance goes awry when he falls in love with Louise (Penelope Cruz) and Sylvia begins an affair with Dave (Mark Strong).

Set around the more photogenic reaches of Notting Hill, the film is the latest in a line of British romantic comedies that want very badly to be the next *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. The usual shortcomings undo it: over-eagerness to please, synthetic characterisation, and a script that just isn't up to snuff.

Considering it's an accredited classic of light comedy, *The Philadelphia Story* (1940) doesn't have that many brilliant lines. Its appeal lies rather in the impeccable timing of the repartee, the graceful playing and the sense of civilised fun that director George Cukor sparks from the tale of a society wedding that threatens to implode. Katharine Hepburn plays the haughty, priggish belle set to marry a respectable dullard when her ex-husband (Cary Grant) shows up to make mischief - and quietly save Hepburn's father from press scandal. Enter a reporter from *Spy* magazine (James Stewart) with photographer (Ruth Hussey) in tow and all the elements of a swooning romantic farce are in place. This was the only time Grant and Stewart appeared on screen together.

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THE WISDOM OF CROCODILES

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Handwritten signature or text at the bottom of the page.

SERENA

MACKESY

TELEVISION REVIEW



This was a successful start to the series, which seems likely to lead right to the line between titillation and wordiness. It gives rise to an interesting thought: do we develop clothes, not because of the misplaced prudery claimed by moralists, but because we can't bear to have stronger sex as evidence? Clothed self-congratulation was the theme of *Orlando*; the wit of *Vanity Fair* (BBC), which made use of unmitigated

shadows' set design, voiced by most of the participants in *Naked Lunch* (EBCX). Despite the fact that the readers aspeners were, in the middle, belatedly presciently to get round the decency laws, much as the Victorians were happy to dress a naked female statue as long as she had no arms, all but two seemed faintly more human than any of the naked-and-nude. I don't know if the programme's makers encouraged participants, or rather tried their best to enlighten the nation's tendency to suffer from self-censoring, but the safety of people's attitudes to their middle-aged bodies was rather more and more underlaid by them. Only the comic wrote that their huge amounts of plastic surgery to shave nearly four years of their faces were seen comically, prompting him to keep those bodies in them. Everyone else was depressed that drooping, spending this will as the summer faded and then as the autumn faded and then as the summer faded on any details or any predictably, then a more direct, then, Bobbie Hill had that grey shadow, you know when you're young, only weakness, before you paint lips and one chap who set in an uncharacteristically archaic John Reids, "Uncharacteristic looks a little thin, really? Oh, I do know

access to clips from the current BBC dramatisation for an assessment of the life and work of William Makepeace Thackeray. Except that, because literary programmes are still not ratings winners - despite the fact that books are the New York *Wall*, they cleverly dressed it up as a social analysis of whether such a one exists today.

One could probably have come up with a one-word answer, but still, one had a chance to grip at Thak, muttering staggering hypocrisy out of the corners of his mouth. "Britain is a warlike society. The lower-middle class want to be middle, the upper-middle class want to be aristocracy. It's a big mess as far as I'm concerned."

And what was Kathy Lettis shamelessly, plebeian upon interrogation. "Plebeia is like a chip of tea with too much milk in it, so the first human, much the right kind of predictability."

One didn't learn much about Thackeray's works apart from the fact that some people will show just about any opportunity to look at any book, but that the Thackeray book might be a really, but the story, but the story was snappy. But the book was improved by the fact that an irritating diary, *Wells*, takes one to know, as the name of Becky Sharp would have said.

BBCl

6.00 Business Breakfast (28:42-3) **9.00 News** (T) (3:38:37), **9.00 Killy** (S) (02:23:59), **9.00 Sive Challenge** (S) (03:08:02), **10.05 City Hospital** (S) (T) (9:38:42-3), **10.45 News: Regional News: Weather** (T) (06:53:59-7), **11.00 Good Living** (S) (08:30:04), **11.25 Cart Cook: Wont Cook** (S) (08:01:17), **11.55 News: National News: Weather** (T) (02:14:48), **12.00 Pass the Buck** (S) (4:54:01), **12.25 Going for a Song** (S) (4:50:08-6), **12.40 The Weather Show** (S) (T) (07:08:32-3), **1.00 News: Weather** (T) (08:04), **1.30 Regional News and Weather** (7:38:24-42), **1.40 Newport** (S) (T) (07:55:58-9), **2.05 Snooker: Liverpool Victoria UK Championship** (T) (07:55:49), **2.35 Wpcad** (F) (S) (3:38:42-7).

3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (S) (S) (06:54:02-3), **3.45 Fireman Sam** (F) (03:02:22), **3.55 Purple** (S) (T) (02:02:22), **4.20 Mr Wymt** (S) (T) (4:38:07-7), **4.35 Smart** (S) (T) (4:37:59), **5.00 Weekend** (S) (T) (07:08:32), **5.10 Byter Grove** (S) (T) (07:34:34).

5.35 Neighbours: Bouncer Turns up his eight - but what's the catch on the airrrr! (S) (T) (4:42:08).

BBC2

[illegible]

ITV Carlton

5.00 CARTV (065371) **9.55** *Thema* (S) (T) (0672545) **10.15** *The Muppet Show* (S) (T) (0672546) **12.25** *Tour de France* (0682359) **12.30** *Top Gear* (S) (T) (0682360) **12.50** *London Today* (T) (06152) **1.30** *The Saturday Show* (S) (T) (0615289) **2.00** *Home and Away* (S) (T) (0625503) **2.40** *Dutch Supremacy* (S) (T) (0625504) **3.10** *ITN News Headlines* (T) (0625505).

5.30 Children's TV, Wizard (R) (0715049) **5.50 Kipper** (S) (0739300) **5.55** *The Adventures of Paddington Bear* (S) (0612689) **5.55** *Cow and Chicken* (0068359) **6.15** *Hey Arnold!* (S) (T) (0691259) **6.40** *Worst Witch* (T) (0722897).

5.10 Home and Away (S) (T) (0498782).

5.40 Newswj Weather (T) (073572).

Channel 4

7.00 The Big Breakfast (S) (T) (68877) **9.00 Channel 4**
Scholar (47533) **10.00 Powerhouses** (T) (479), **12.00**
Kingsley Street (T77), **14.30 Dream of Jeanne** (T) (T)
14.50 **Lord Judge** (S) (67493) **15.00** **1984**
The Three Stooges (478917).

1.55 UK The Fantastic Five (Lawrence Hargrave)
3801 UK **Unfolding** adaptation of Josephine Tey's
 novel, starring Michael Denison as the lawyer who
 investigates a young girl's disappearance. **Dulcie Gray** is
 the (46278807).

3.30 Collectors' Lot (T) (773) **4.00 Fillian to One** (T)
2.20 **4.30 Countdown** (S) (T) (742157), **4.55 Ricki**
Lowe (S) (T) (604420).

5.30 Pet Rescue Roadshow. How to give a bulldog a
 makeover – plus the Rockwood dog-display team make
 a guest appearance (T) (864).

Channel 5

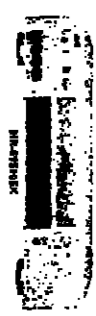
6.00 *5 News and Sport* (3) (p.73339), **7.00** *Widescreen* (7) (S) (7) (p.5197), **7.30** *Millennium* (3) (p.6863505), **7.45** *Winners House* (H) (3) (p.662649), **8.00** *Heavencreak* (H) (3) (p.68589), **8.30** *Daphne's Room* (7) (p.2535662), **9.00** *The Ambulance Hunter* (H) (3) (7) (p.553530), **9.15** *Russell Grant's Houseboat* (H) (42x662) (7) (p.553530), **9.30** *Therapy* (S) (p.67555), **10.00** *Shane on the Couch* (S) (7) (p.67555), **10.15** *Shane on the Couch* (S) (7) (p.67555), **10.30** *Shane on the Couch* (S) (7) (p.67555), **10.45** *Shane on the Couch* (S) (7) (p.67555), **11.00** *Shane on the Couch* (S) (7) (p.67555), **11.15** *Shane on the Couch* (S) (7) (p.67555), **11.30** *Shane on the Couch* (S) (7) (p.67555), **11.45** *Shane on the Couch* (S) (7) (p.67555), **12.00** *Family Affairs* (S) (7) (p.727045), **12.30** *The Road and the Beach* (H) (3) (p.618934), **1.30** *Sore and Daughters* (7x2537) (2, 00) 100 Pct Cont Gold (S) (p.674830), **2.30** *Good Afternoon* (3) (p.616713).

3.30 ***Child: The Hired Hand*** (Pleat Fords 971 US). Old-style western about three offhens whose dreams of going to California are shattered when they stop in a New Mexico village. See *Film of the Day*, below (7) (p.656757).

5.30 ***The Roseanne Show*** (p.64475).

ROCKY LID

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DOCUMENTARY OF THE DAY

BEAT ROUTE (from BECC) if you can ignore the disorientating jumble of the titles, *Pools Holland's* new musical travel series has much to offer. A highlight of the first programme is a trip to the Statue Park on the outskirts of Budapest, the peeling faces for egalitarian representations of Marx, Lenin and other communist icons. If anything, there is a bit too much Holland (*tygh!* in this tale of Hungary - while you have to land the programme's date of spontaneously 30 minutes is a long time to fill with wretched improvisation, so the frequent musical interludes are a welcome fortification. On the whole, it's a bit of a muddle, but *Pools* is better than Judith Chalmers.

BEAUTY SHOW OF THE DAY

MISS WORLD (9pm CT, 10p) *What's it, 49 years old, based in the Seychelles and doesn't wear a swimsuit?* The Miss World competition is pure Channel 5, zig-zagging along a thin line between naughtiness and post-modern credibility—labeled a troll along *Survivor* Beach. If you like The horses of the nation rest in the fragrant hands on 18-year-old barista from Liverpool. The contestants, all of whom have to be single, childless and between the ages of 17 and 24, have been bonding in the sun for a month now, learning how not to fall over on stage and anticipating a chat with the host, Boyzone's Norman Neelands. Gayle, in a Eurovision Song Contest kind of way.

FILM OF THE DAY

THE HIRED HAND (3:30pm CBS) A bizarre piece of scheduling from our idiosyncratic friends at Channel 5. For Peter Fonda's follow-up to *Easy Rider*, it's not a western in the traditional sense, but the genre's themes and motifs are examined in uncommon depth, especially in the film's later stages. Fonda (*1976*) stars as office Henry Collins, who is recruited with suspicion by his wife, Norma (Blume), after some years away. When Duke supports as the friend, Arch, some of the more straight-faced critics at the time were dismissive; don't believe a word of it: it's a lino example of the consistent-cowboy film.

